

BEFORE AND AFTER REVOLUTION



by
A Z I Z B E G



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DEDICATED

to

Quaid-i-Azam and his Faithful Followers



CONTENTS

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Pages

Preface

PART I

CHAPTERS :

I. The Struggle	1
II. Pangs of Birth	27

PART II

III. Making a Constitution	51
IV. Electoral Battle	..	..	..	71
V. One Unit Drama	..	..	..	93
VI. Thought for Food	..	..	..	121
VII. Economic Lapses	..	..	..	137
VIII. Graft and Greed	..	..	..	159
IX. On the Pyre	..	...	..	175

PART III

X. The Revolution	..	..	..	193
XI. In the name of Allah	..	..	..	209
XII. Pyramid of Democracy	..	..	..	225
XIII. For the Tiller	..	..	..	241
XIV. Planning for Growth	..	..	..	253
XV. Problems and Prospects	..	..	..	263
XVI. Postscript	..	..	..	277



P R E F A C E

When Quaid-i-Azam stood up and said that Musalmans were a nation and no nation could live without a house of its own, our enemies laughed at us, mocked us and ridiculed the idea of separation. To them, Pakistan was a reactionary move, Jinnah was a reactionary man and Muslim League was a reactionary body. And, yet, Pakistan was born—born with a bang. To many a foreigner, the birth of Pakistan was an object of marvel, a modern miracle that had no precedent in contemporary political history. How is it that no people in living memory achieved so much, in so short a period, with so meagre resources and against so heavy an opposition as Musalmans did in less than a decade?

The fact is that in their 1,000-year history in the Indian subcontinent, Musalmans were never so united and so determined as they were from 1940 to 1947, a brief span of seven years, when the idea of Pakistan became a physical reality and a big nation state appeared on the map of the world. We were imbued with a passion and animated by a spirit that paved the way for our triumphant march into a country we had christened Pakistan. Making their way through pools of blood and

walking in the shadow of swords, many of them set out in search of a home they had never seen but which, they knew, was their real home. Many kissed the dust before they could touch the homeland; and many reached Pakistan only to perish in Pakistan. They died, but the whole atmosphere reverberated with the echoes of "Pakistan Zindabad". They died with a lingering smile on their parched lips; they had died with the pride of nationhood, a sense of unity with the whole, and faith in the destiny of the country and the people to whom they were struggling to belong. Thus, the first part of the book is a story of the challenge Pakistan has faced since its inception; it is the story of a hope and a faith which created the biggest nation state in the modern world; it is the story of a people who were prepared to pay any price, face any hardships and make any sacrifice for the sake of freedom. The first two chapters cover a century of Muslim struggle in the subcontinent, culminating in the establishment of Pakistan as the national homeland of a people who had to fight against British might and Hindu die-hardism before they could taste the fruits of freedom.

But, what happened to the House that Jinnah built? What happened to this country, to these people? A nation created Pakistan, but did Pakistan create a nation? On the eve of Revolution, the sentiments that created Pakistan seemed to expire, the values which gave birth to our State seemed to vanish and it appeared

that we were every day losing the spiritual assets which were potentially capable of sustaining our strength as a nation. The spirit of unity was gone and its place was taken by sectional and sectarian obscurantism. We were in a state of moral coma; we had nearly stopped feeling, stopped thinking and stopped reacting to the situation we faced. In a decade, our idealism decayed to such an extent that it was considered incredible for anyone to be actuated by patriotic motives. Thus, a young nation became suddenly old and inert; we do not age with time but by deserting our ideals. It led to frustration which always works in a vicious circle; every failure produced frustration which, in turn, reduced our ability to fight failures. How and why did it happen? We have always been proud of our people; they are basically good and sound, patient and patriotic. I need not invite you to share my belief that our mute millions could be moulded into the most powerful pattern of life if our ex-rulers had the will and vision to make use of this abundant and fruitful raw human material. But, the men who ruled the country after Quaid-i-Azam, betrayed the Revolution wrought by Pakistan.

This is the subject of the second part of the book. Chapters 3,4 and 5 deal with the dismal history of constitution-making and tell the truth about the 'war of ideologies' which shook the country from Khyber Pass to Chittagong Hill Tracts and expose the bogey of issues

which has become matters of life and death for wrangling politicians. The chapter on the electorate issue is likely by to be misunderstood if it is not carefully read and appreciated as a whole. In the next two chapter I have tried to explain the meaning and gravity of the economic malaise which had clutched the country and the battle for food and foreign exchange. Chapter eight is a tragic commentary on corruption which had so subtly eaten into the vitals of our life that few believed we could survive this national cancer. We were marching towards a cemetery; the ninth chapter depicts the state of the nation on the eve of Revolution.

In this part of the book, I have tried to avoid names and pass judgement on individual politicians. This personal approach might have added to the readability of the book but I could only boost this entertainment aspect at the risk of losing objectivity. Since all humans have their pet prejudices, you can scarcely blame me if I refused to trust myself. Besides, the fact that the class of politicians as such has been condemned is hardly an admission that there were no men of integrity in our public life. But, who listens to the feeble voice of sanity when it is a case of collective madness; and who can heed the lone cry of patriotism when the majority of rulers fall in love with themselves. Thus, the Revolution was the product of the timely realisation that the people of Pakistan were, to quote President Ayub, "sick and tired

of the unscrupulous type of politicians who were busy, tearing their dear country into pieces."

The Revolutionary regime was welcomed not because the people would have greeted any change but we found in the new order a great opportunity to pull the country out of the abyss and plan for a better tomorrow. In other words, there was potential goodwill for the new Government, but it largely stemmed from the realisation that our old rulers had entered into a pact with their conspiring ego and created more problems than they were competent to solve. The Martial Law over, it is possible for the people today to have a better chance of measuring the achievements of the Revolution in terms of public good. President Ayub once said that it would be unfair to expect miracles from his Government. But the fact is that the people did expect miracles because the leaders of the Revolution were the masters of the situation and possessed absolute power; they could change the face of the country if they made a discreet use of the potential at their disposal. Secondly, these high expectations seemed partly justified because the Revolution had been able to initiate sweeping reforms in all sectors of national life. Thus, the third part of the book is devoted to the Revolution its nature, necessity and achievements.

The last two chapters is a humble dissertation on the problems and perils we still face. I have suggested a few possible prescriptions, but I am the last to claim the

Last word on the subject. It is only a plea to set our house in order—before it topples again.

The book is far from being a full representation of the country, but I have honestly striven to present a profile of Pakistan as I see it.

As I am writing these words, members of the newly-elected National Assembly are being sworn in in the Ayub Hall; it may well be the beginning of a third revolution in the variegated fortunes of Pakistan. I say so for two reasons: Ayub has made a graceful and voluntary surrender of power and, secondly, it is the beginning of a trial of strength between past trends, present scenes and the urgency of carving a new future. Enthusiasm without patience may destroy the meaning of the drama which is visibly unfolding the scroll of Pakistan's destiny.

AZIZ BEG

RAWALPINDI

June 8, 1962.

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A. B.



"Where the mind is without fear and the head held high
Into that Heaven, my Father, let my country awake.



PART I

CHAPTER I

THE STRUGGLE

*"It was once asked as to who was
the author of Pakistan. My
reply was 'Every Musalman'."*

— Quaid-i-Azam



THE STRUGGLE

On the Tenth Day of May, 1857, was fired the first shot of the freedom battle which, after nearly a century of struggle, culminated in the sovereign Muslim State of Pakistan. As the British wrested the crown from the Muslims, they began to believe that their real enemies were the Muslims, and the only way to strengthen their stranglehold on the country was not only to crush the crusading resistance groups but to denude the Muslims of all political, cultural and economic power that could be mustered for another armed challenge to the new British Empire. Thus, Mutiny became a Muslim conspiracy against the British. And, thus, began the British conspiracy against the Muslims, spanned over ninety years, from Mutiny to Mountbatten.

It was all planned; it was a conscious policy of repression and suppression. Once the proud rulers of India, the Muslims soon began to see that they were being reduced to a position of servitude. But it was not only the loss of political power; it was the mounting threat to their culture, to their language, to their way of life, and even to their religion that seemed to spell their virtual destruction. The decks were cleared for the biggest genocide in history. The ship of the Mughal Empire had sunk; Sirajuddaulah was humbled and defeated

at Plassey, the British had become masters of the rich and resourceful province of Bengal; Tipu Sultan, the last strong man pitched against the new conquerors, fell a martyr. In the north-west, Shah Ismai Shaheed died battling against Ranjit Singh's hordes. The British had won the struggle for supremacy. But it was not only the might and majesty of the Mughal Empire that had disappeared; it was the reactionary and ruthless anti-Muslim policy that had become a real danger to the future of Musalmans as a community, as a religious group and cultural entity. Thus, millions of Musalmans were at the mercy of British bureaucrats whose fathers and forefathers had come as petty traders and all the Hindus became pet children to be pampered.

In this patronage of Hindus and persecution of Muslims lay the seeds of the Pakistan movement whose intellectual forerunner was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. But he had a namesake, Sayyid Ahmad, who was busy mobilizing his forces against the British in the thirties of the last century. He was an ascetic who believed in action; he was a reformer who fought for freedom at a time when there was hardly any vestige of Muslim power in the Indian subcontinent. In 1823, he occupied a number of forts in upper Punjab and organised the Frontier and Punjab Muslims into an 'army of Islam.' Within seven years, he captured Peshawar and stationed his forces on the plains of Indus, he founded a small State on the ideological principles of Islam. He died in 1831 but the fire of his

movement did not die; the Mopah outbreaks and Santhal, rising finally burst into the Revolution of 1857. It was an all-out war; Delhi was captured; Bahadur Shah was proclaimed the Emperor of Hindustan; the British troops were demoralised; but the freedom fighters were betrayed by their own countrymen. The Sikh States of Patiala, Nabha and Jind declared their loyalty to foreign masters; the Punjab patriots who marched towards Delhi were wiped out; the powder factory at Chariwala was blown up; the revolution became a rebellion and the war of liberation a mutiny. The movement had lost its propellers; Delhi was sacked; millions of innocent men, women and children were massacred; the British troops carried fire and sword into hundreds of noble Muslim houses.

Who led the Revolution? The British were convinced that it was a Muslim revolt without Hindu support, as Henry Harrington pointed out in a pamphlet in 1858, "the Hindus were not the contrivers, the primary movers of the rebellion, the Mohammadens, planned and organised the rebellion for their own aggrandizement alone and the Hindu sepoy of the Bengal army were their dupes and instruments." In fact, Lord Ellenborough wrote in one of his despatches in 1842, "I could not have credited the extent to which the Mohammadans desire our failure...the Hindus, on the other hand, are delighted. It seems to me most unwise when we are sure of the hostility of one-tenth, not to secure the enthu-

siastic support of the nine-tenth which are faithful.. ' Thus, the Brahmans became 'the most loyal subjects of Her Majesty's Government', the Musalmans were singled out for a treatment which reduced them to a position of 'hewers of wood and drawers of water.' It was then generally believed that "if any statesman wants to make a sensation in the House of Commons, he has only to truly narrate the history of those Mohammadan families of Bengal." The following excerpts from Hunter's famous book are a lasting testimony on the pitiable plight of Muslims:

"The educated Mohammadan, confident in his old training, sees himself practically excluded from the share of power and of the emoluments of Government which he hitherto had almost monopolized, and sees these and all other advantages of life passed into the hands of the hated Hindus...

"Before the country passed under our rule, the Musalmans professed the same faith, ate the same food, and in all essentials lived the same lives, as they do now. To this day they exhibit at intervals their intense feeling of nationality and capability of warlike enterprise, but in all other respects they are a race ruined under British rule...

"A hundred and seventy years ago, it was almost impossible for a well-born Musalman in Bengal to become poor, at present it is almost impossible for him to continue rich.. No Mohammadan gentleman of birth

can enter our Regiments; and even if a place could be found for him in our military system, that place would no longer be a source of wealth...

"We shut the Musalman aristocracy out of the Army, because we believed that their exclusion was necessary to our own safety. We deprived them of their monopoly of the most lucrative functions in the Administration, because their deprivation was essential. But these grounds, however good in themselves, fail to convince an ancient nobility suffering under the blight of British rule.

"In one extensive Department the other day it was discovered that there was not a single employee who could read the Musalman dialect; and, in fact, there is now scarcely a Government office in Calcutta (then headquarters of the Government of India) in which a Mohammadan can hope for any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of inkpots, and mender of pens."

But, the holocaust was not only followed by victimization of Muslims on the economic plane; the British began to tamper with their religious affairs; they wanted to break the spirit of Islam. They financed religious controversies and created schisms in Muslims ranks. The Ulama were bribed and congregations were organised to condemn the revolutionaries and paint them as apostates and heretics who had bartered away their faith. The Indian Muslims were without a cause, without a leader and without even hope. It was on this scene of wilderness that Sir Syed Ahmad entered as a savant and

saviour and laid the foundations of a movement which won a State after nine decades.

This middle-aged sub-judge, with a scholastic bent of mind, leapt into fame with the publication, in 1847, of *Asar-ul-sanadid*. His archaeological research into Delhi's old monuments aroused great academic interest but few imagined that he was destined to play a more positive architectural role. If today we assess his services to the cause of Muslim regeneration in India, we would perhaps like to believe that he was a powerful anti-British Muslim leader, but he was more realistic than revolutionary. His realism was based on the realisation that the only way to revitalise the dying Muslims was to co-operate with the British and the only way to promote this co-operation was to establish "communication" between the "rulers" and the "subjects." The best means of this communication was education—learning the western languages, arts and sciences. As Sir Syed Ahmad put it, "I have invariably come to the conclusion that the absence of community of feeling between the two races was due to the absence of the community of ideas and the community of interests. And, gentlemen, I felt equally certain that so long as this state of things continued, the Muslims of India could make no progress under the English rule. It then appeared to me that nothing could remove these obstacles to progress but education." Sir Syed Ahmad was attacked by some of his co-religionists but today we know that he was right, for no other policy

would have saved the Muslims who were ripe for ruin.' Sir Syed Ahmad gave them the tools and training to fight the battle that lay ahead. His greatest contribution was the Aligarh University which, in the years to come, became the 'true arsenal of Pakistan.'

Sir Syed's thesis on the causes of the 'Indian revolt' was a blend of truth and courage, an inquisitorial probe into British administrative lapses. He was almost dubbed a seditionist, but the British soon realised the value of the friendly advice he had tendered. Sir Syed deplored the denial of representation to Muslims in the higher councils and pointed out that 'it is highly conducive to the welfare of Government that the people should have a voice. . .'. As Sir Syed pleaded for representative Government, he became more and more conscious of 'Muslims as a distinct nation.' According to Hali, his biographer, Sir Syed was convinced that the "Hindus and Musalmans will never be able to unite. The unpleasantness created between the two peoples by educated Hindus is nothing compared to what is coming in the future. With the progressive spread of education among Hindus, there will develop more bitterness between the two peoples."

The prophecy came true, the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century saw the gradual growth of the British-sponsored All-India National Congress. In spite of its Hindu character and complexion, the Muslim masses and leaders liked to associate them-

selves with an organisation which was pledged to liberate the country from foreign yoke. But it was soon discovered that the Congress was fighting for Hindu freedom alone and its goal of independence would only lead to the perpetual dependence of Muslims on an avowedly anti-Muslim majority community. Sir Syed was the first to realise the danger of merging the political identity of his people with the brute Hindu majority. He even pleaded for an elective system to ensure that Muslims were given separate nomination in the municipal bodies which were created by Lord Ripon because "in a country like India, where caste and religious distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of various races, where education in its modern sense has not made an equal progress among all the sections of the population, I am convinced that the introduction of the principle of election, pure and simple, for representation of various interests on the local boards and district councils would be attended with evils of greater significance than purely economic considerations."

When this demand was revived by the Congress, Sir Syed advanced arguments which almost read like any one of Quaid-i-Azam's statements that the Western type of democracy was not suited to the genius of India. Sir Syed said, "The second demand of the National Congress is that the people should elect a section of the Viceroy's Council. They want to copy the English House of Lords and the House of Commons. And let us first suppose

that all the Mohammadans vote for a Mohammadan, member and all Hindu electors vote for a Hindu member and now count how many votes the Mohammadan member will have and how many the Hindu. It is certain that the Hindu member will have four times as many votes, because their population is four times as numerous. It will be like a game of dice, in which one man had four dice and the other only one."

The Indian Councils Act of 1892 had the semblance of a representative government inasmuch as members of legislatures were to be returned by elected bodies and nominated by the Government. For the first time, Muslims demanded separate representation to the local bodies and councils 'commensurate not merely with their numerical strength but also with their political importance..'. The birth of the Muslim League in 1906 "to protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans of India" and the Minto-Morley Reforms are marked by this 'right to elect their representatives by separate electorates.'

The partition of Bengal in 1905 and its annulment after six years were followed by Lucknow Pact in 1916; it presented a united front to the Government and pleaded for constitutional reforms to prepare the country for self-government or swaraj. Firstly, it was agreed that "no Bill, nor any clause thereof, nor a resolution introduced by a non-official affecting one or the other community shall be proceeded with, if three-fourth of

the members of the community in the particular Council, Imperial and Provincial, opposed the Bill or any clause thereof or the resolution." Secondly, it laid down that "one-third of the Indian elected members should be Mohammadans, elected by separate electorates in the several provinces, in the proportion, as nearly as might be, in which they were represented on the Provincial Legislative Councils by separate Mohammadan electorates." These clauses were incorporated in the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, but the agitation that followed the India Act of 1919 soon degenerated into Hindu-Muslim riots. The political scene was dominated by Gandhi and Ali Brothers; the Hindu leaders exploited the Muslim Khilafat sentiments and boosted the Swadeshi movement. But it was soon found that they were working to replace the British Kingdom by Hindudom; the face of Hindu communalism had turned militant and the Shudhi movement was in full swing. Thus, all unity efforts failed, because no basic unity ever existed. The Simon Commission, Jinnah's Fourteen Points, the Nehru Report, and the Round Table Conferences—all these subsequent political landmarks assumed a communal character because the Hindus could not conceal their contempt for Muslim nationalist aspirations, they were determined to strike a *bania* bargain and establish permanent rule of the majority community.

At last, the sage showed the way. Poet Iqbal, who became the President of the Allahabad Session of the

All-India Muslim League in 1930, demanded a country , within a country a sovereign Muslim State carved out of India. After relating the genesis of the demand, he declared, "...The units of Indian society are not territorial as in European countries. India is a continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages and professing different religions... The principle of European democracy cannot be applied to India without recognising the fact of communal groups. The Muslim demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India is, therefore, perfectly justified.... I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire and the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of Muslims... The idea need not alarm the Hindus or the British. India is the greatest Muslim country in the world. The life of Islam as a cultural force in this country very largely depends on its centralisation in a specified territory. It will intensify their sense of responsibility and deepen their patriotic feeling. Thus possessing full opportunity of development within the body-politic of India, the North-West Indian Muslims will prove the best defenders of India against a foreign invasion, be the invasion one of ideas or of bayonets.

"I, therefore, demand the formation of a consolidated Muslim State in the best interests of India and Islam. For India, it means security and peace resulting from an internal balance of power; for Islam an opportunity to rid itself of the stamp that Arabian imperialism was forced to give it, to mobilize its law, its education, its culture, and to bring them into closer contact with its own original spirit and with the spirit of modern times.'

The Hindu press howled and called it 'freak of a poet's wayward imagination'; the Hindu leaders yelled and called it a blasphemous idea whose progenitors were either lunatics or traitors. Meanwhile Jinnah, the most disillusioned man, who had not only left the Congress but left the country and had temporarily settled in London, came back to give battle to the enemy. According to Iqbal, Jinnah was 'the only Muslim in India to whom the community has a right to look up for safe guidance.' With the fire and faith of a Lincoln, the courage and conviction of a Napoleon, the shrewdness and statesmanship of a Disraeli, Jinnah rose like a mountain which overshadowed his worst detractors. He reorganised the Muslim League, fought the Hindu Congress, challenged the British diehards and exposed the Muslim stooges. He demolished the fiction that the Congress and the British Government were the only two parties in the country; the Muslim League emerged as the only representative and authoritative organisation to speak for Muslim India. The Muslim League had not

adopted Pakistan as its constitutional goal but, after, 1937, it had won all the bye-elections to the Central and Provincial legislatures. The 30-month Hindu Congress rule in seven Indian provinces under the Government of India Act 1935 proved to be the last nail in the coffin of united India. The Congress excesses committed during this period left little hope of communal settlement. The 'Ram Raj' over, the Muslim League observed a 'Day of Deliverance' and Jinnah declared that "the Muslims can expect neither justice nor fairplay under the Congress Government. English parliamentary government with its emphasis on majority rule and the maintenance of a strong Central Government would permanently subject Muslims to the Congress and was therefore unsuited to India."

The Congress leaders began to see a horizon of Hindu hegemony over the subcontinent; they thought it was beginning of Vedic renaissance and the end of all anti-Brahman elements. The Wardha and Vidhya Mandir schemes of education initiated by the Congress ministries were subtly designed to revive the fusion of India's cultural homogeneity, propagate the concept of a common nationality and deprive the Muslims of their awareness as a separate people. It was an ingenious and insidious attempt to operate upon the Muslim mind, conduct education under the spell of Hindu mantras and tantras and ensure our intellectual emasculation before the transfer of power. Thus, Bande Mataram was loved as a

national song because it symbolised their hatred of Muslim rule. Shivaj, Govind Singh and Banda Bargari were deified as national heroes because they fought against the Muslims. Thus, the *kultur kamp* became more and more discernible; the gulf could not be spanned by constitutional bridges. The so-called 'safeguards', 'concessions', 'weightages' and even 'separate electorates' were no substitute for a sovereign State; there could be no compromise except on the basis of clear-cut partition. At the historic Lahore session of the League, the representative of Muslim India demanded Pakistan because "no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial adjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute independent states in which the constituted units shall be autonomous and sovereign."

The die was cast; the goal was set; the choice was 'Pakistan or perish.' From this day, the struggle acquired a dynamic meaning; a hundred million hearts were beating in unison; the whole nation paced together and took one big step towards Pakistan. The enemy thrust its weapons at all fronts but the nation marched together, from strength to strength, from victory to victory.

Pakistan was no longer an embryonic idea, it was the political objective of a people who stood up and spoke with one voice: "We are a nation. We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation. We are a nation of a hundred million, and what is more we are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitude and ambitions, in short, we have our own distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of international law, we are a Nation."

After exactly two years of the Pakistan Resolution, Sir Stafford Cripps arrived in India with a Draft Declaration conceding "the right of any province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new constitution to retain its present constitutional position. . . With such non-acceding provinces, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new constitution giving them the same full status as Indian Union." For the Congress leaders it was a road to Pakistan, though they turned down the offer on the plea that representatives of Princely States should be elected and not nominated and an Indian should be appointed to the Defence portfolio. The War had entered the third year; Gandhi thought that it was "a post-dated cheque on a bank which is obviously failing." But it was more a

bankruptcy of Hindu statesmanship: they would not accept anything which tended to consider the Muslims more than a minority.

The failure of the Cripps mission and ban on the Congress organisation was followed by a period of lull which was broken by C. Rajgopalacharia's formula, exhorting the Muslims to accept a compromise for 'enabling them jointly to assault the imperial citadel.' The stalemate continued till Lord Wavell, the new Viceroy and Governor-General, broadcast his plan on 14 June 1945, inviting the Indian leaders to form 'a new executive council with more representatives of organised political opinion' in order to 'prosecute the war against Japan with the utmost energy' and to carry on the government 'with the manifold possibility of post-war development in front of it'. It was a parity formula promising equal representation to Muslims and caste Hindus in the Executive Council. But, it was an illusory offer as, after the inclusion of representatives belonging to Sikhs, Scheduled Castes and Christians the League share could not be more than one-third in the Central Government. What is more, the Congress claimed two seats for 'nationalist Muslims' and Lord Wavell pleaded for including a member from Khizar Hayat's Punjab coterie. It was an impossible proposition. Quaid-e-Azam refused to sign 'the death warrant of the League' and declared that 'no power on earth shall make him acquiesce in a settlement which is against the interest of Islam'. Thus, the Simla Conference

foundered on the rock of Hindu intransigence. The only way out of the impasse was to hold elections, let Muslims vote and give their verdict, demanded Quaid- -Azam. The poll day was a victory day, the Muslim League bagged all the Central seats. A majority of Muslim seats in provincial legislatures were also won by the League; in Assam, 31 out of 34, in Sind, 29 out of 34, in the Frontier, 17 out of 30, in the Punjab, 79 out of 86, in Bengal, 112 out of 119 in U.P. 54 out of 66, in Bihar, 36 out of 40, in Madras, 29 out of 29, in Bombay, 30 out of 30. In C.P. and Orissa, the non-League candidates could not capture a single Muslim seat. The Hindu leaders went into tantrums; and Sardar Patel burst out in a statement: "The Muslim League has captured all the Muslim seats and it may celebrate victory day and believe that Pakistan has been achieved. But Pakistan cannot be achieved in this manner. Pakistan is not in the hands of British Government. If Pakistan is to be achieved, Hindus and Muslims will have to fight. There will be civil war. The Congress has decided not to approach the League till it changes its policy. It can take by force whatever it wants. The Congress will again form ministries in the provinces. We will then see where Pakistan stands. It will be time then to celebrate victory day."

But these furious fulminations led nowhere; these threats and thunders served only one purpose—the gulf widened, the antagonism grew and Hindus and Muslims became more and more separate entities. Every attempt

to boo the Muslims proved a boomerang; every attempt to belittle the League made it stronger; every attempt to force a merger created new cleavages; every attempt to divide the nation welded its broken parts; every attempt to pull down Jinnah raised his stature; every move to weaken the Pakistan movement made it mightier; every hostile act became a favourable factor; more the opposition, more the passion for the partition of India. It was no longer a Congress-League question, it was an open Hindu-Muslim communal conflict which clearly pointed to the inevitability of division.

The British Government sent a Parliamentary Delegation to India to make a political reconnaissance of the country. On 25 March 1946, the Cabinet Mission arrived 'with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to attain her freedom as speedily and as fully as possible'. But, even before the nature of their assignment was explained to the leaders of political parties the British Premier declared that no minority would be encouraged to hold up India's progress towards independence. The announcement was hailed by Hindu leaders as a slap in the face of the League a surrender to the majority community and even recognition of India's geographical unity. The Muslim League leaders challenged the statement and sought clarification before the Mission could proceed with the work. A conference had to be called at Simla but, as in the past, the talks were deadlocked by the Congress. The Cabinet Mission

had to make its own recommendations: on 16 May 1946, they issued a statement which became the starting point of an interminable battle of interpretations. Firstly, the Cabinet Mission conceded 'the possibility of a partition of India', that they were 'greatly impressed by the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to perpetual Hindu majority rule', that 'this feeling has become very strong and widespread amongst the Muslims and cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards' and 'if there is to be internal peace in India it must be secured by measures which will assure to the Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion and economic or other interests which might become submerged in a purely unitary India in which the Hindus with their greatly superior number must be a dominant element.' Secondly, they envisaged a plan for dividing India into three groups: (A) Hindu majority provinces, (B) Muslim majority provinces, (C) Bengal and Assam. These groups were to handle all the subjects except defence, communications and foreign affairs: the three constituent assemblies of these groups were to draw up their own constitutions and, ultimately, the members were to meet in one constituent assembly to frame a constitution for the Indian Union. The Hindus were so sure of League's rejection of the plan that they not only welcomed it but began to believe that the dream of Pakistan had been blown up. But little did they know the man called Jinnah: the redeeming feature of the plan was

the compulsory grouping clause and the option given to these groups to leave the Union after ten years. According to the Congress, the provinces could not be compelled to join this or that group and the constituent assembly was a sovereign body, competent to modify the plan and even change its basic structure in the years to come. The Mission members were asked to throw light on these points. The League Council which met on June 6 endorsed the plan and agreed to work it. It had been clearly laid down in the plan that 'it could either be accepted as a whole or rejected as a whole' and secondly, if any party rejected the plan, 'the Viceroy would proceed with the execution of the plan and form an interim government with the help of the co-operating party.' The Congress had rejected the plan, the League had accepted the plan; but the League was not asked to form the interim government. This betrayal was not only followed by a caretaker administration of official nominees but an invitation to Pandit Nehru to form an interim Government.

It was insult to injury; the League was by-passed. It was breach of faith; the Viceroy had eaten his solemn words and gone back on the August declaration. It was a sop to Hindu India; but the action proved to be more than mere appeasement of the majority community. The Muslim League's decision to observe August 16 as 'Direct Action Day' and September 1 as 'Back Day' to register their peaceful protest against the treatment

meted out to them was a signal for communal violence , and mass massacre of Muslims in Calcutta, Bombay , Bihar, Garmukteswar and other places. To say that they behaved like beasts would be a libellous charge against the lower animals. The Great Calcutta Killing was described by a foreign observer as "an outburst of an explosion. Calcutta Muslims, like those in the rest of Muslim India, made a programme to observe a Day. As usual, a complete hartal was to be observed from that day. Muslims were to march in peaceful processions and converge at a huge maidan within the town where a meeting was to be held. When, on the appointed day, Muslims in their thousands marched out, many of them carrying little children along with them, Calcutta was suddenly shaken. Armed gangs of Hindus and Sikhs fell on Muslims. They attacked Muslim localities now depleted of male members. The details of this mass slaughter are too harrowing and too revolting to be recalled. The idea behind this planned, well-organised and sudden attack was to demoralise the Muslims once for all." On the testimony of another foreign writer, "Garmukteswar, a small town in the vicinity of Meerut, where Hindu pilgrims in their thousands had assembled at a holy annual festival, was the scene of sudden onslaught on the handful of Muslims who had set up their shops at this fair. Not a woman or a child was spared." Referring to the atrocities in Bihar, Sir Francis Tucker wrote: "During October and November, in

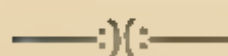
Bihar great mobs of Hindus turned suddenly, but with every preparation for the deed, upon the few Muslims who had lived and whose forefathers had lived, in amity and trust all their lives, among these very Hindu neighbours..The number of Muslim dead men, women, and children, in this short, savage killing was about seven thousand to eight thousand. In the United Provinces even pregnant women were ripped up, their unborn babies torn out and the infants' brains dashed out on walls and on the ground. There was rape, and women and children were seized by the legs by burly fiends and torn apart.."

Meanwhile, the League had accepted Wavell's offer to join the Central Government, but there was no end to communal frenzy. The principal towns in the Punjab were ablaze, the Unionist Khizar Hayat Khan was invited to form a ministry even though the Muslim League constituted the largest single party in the Assembly. As the civil disobedience movement against the Government gained momentum Khizar Hayat resigned and Khan of Mamdot was asked to form the ministry. The Akali leader, Master Tara Singh, was so rudely shaken by the prospects of Pakistan that brandishing his *kispan* outside the Assembly hall he exclaimed, "the time has come when the might of the sword alone shall rule. The Sikhs are ready. We are to bring the Muslims to their senses." Another Sikh leader shouted, "the crusade starts. Hundred years from today our

yellow flag was flying on the fort of Lahore. The same flag shall fly again." The volcano had erupted; the flames were going up and the fire spreading; the demon of communalism was on the march. Lord Wavell was recalled and Lord Mountbatten arrived in India as the last British Viceroy. All talk of unity had died down; there was no alternative to Pakistan. The June 3 Plan envisaged the transfer of power to two constituent assemblies and appointed a boundary commission for demarcation purposes. Before Pakistan was formally inaugurated as a sovereign State on 14 August 1947, the Hindu leaders had their last misfire; they tried to assure the whole world that the new State would starve before long. But, enemy forebodings proved lies and Jinnah proved the prophet of Pakistan.

This is the story of the Muslim nation; born in adversity, bereaved of parents, persecuted by aliens, betrayed by countrymen, segregated in life, it embarked upon a lone career of hope, the voyage of freedom which flowered into Pakistan, after ninety years. The early Brahmo-British combine operated as a steamroller against the Muslims and created consciousness of a common ideology which gave them a common goal, the period of struggle and suffering gave them a common leader; and the leader gave them a common flag and platform. Sir Syed saw a vision, Iqbal dreamt a dream and Jinnah translated this spiritual heritage into territorial terms and founded the State of Pakistan.

Quaid-Azam was once asked to name the author of Pakistan: "Every Musalman", he said, without a moment's hesitation. Every Muslim heart generated power which Jinnah pooled under his leadership; a nation was being bred in the womb of Time; there was love of Pakistan before there was land of Pakistan. Thus, Pakistan was the miracle of unity, a product of will power, a triumph of togetherness, born of a social entity which required millions of fighters before the battle could be won.



CHAPTER II

PANGS OF BIRTH

*"Our new-born State is bleeding
from wounds inflicted by our
enemies."*

Quaid-i-Azam



PANGS OF BIRTH

The Day of Destiny had come; a State was born, a nation found a homeland; Pakistan was no longer a vision but a reality. Referring to this 'epoch-making event', a former British Secretary of State said, "if we look at the course of history, what new nation was born in happier circumstances than Pakistan, for Pakistan has come into being as a result of mutual agreement and consent instead of emerging like the majority of modern nations after years of civil or international strife". But this congratulatory message assumed a sinister import as we discovered a 'maimed and mutilated' Pakistan. The Radcliffe Award, demarcating boundaries between the two countries, unleashed disruptive forces which few could foresee. It was a 'territorial murder', the decisions embodied in the three reports materially altered the boundaries as set forth under the notional division: the Indian Union was the gainer and Pakistan the loser. The Chairman of the Boundary Commission was openly accused of going beyond his terms of reference and the Award was universally condemned as unjust, unfair, unwise and one-sided, a parting kick of the British, a violence against the principles of contiguous majority areas and an open invitation to war between India and Pakistan. The first bitter fruit of the so-called Award was mass evacuation, though it was

decided at an inter-Dominion conference held on 19 September 1947 that "it was the policy of both Governments to create and maintain conditions in which the minorities could live in security." The exchange of population was never envisaged by Partition; but the 'agreed arrangement' did not suit India and 'as a matter of policy' Indian leaders planned a genocide of Muslims and executed 'a deep-aid conspiracy in utter disregard of the principles of honesty, chivalry and honour.' The inevitable happened; millions had to flee from their homes and seek refuge in Pakistan. It was like a hungry, thirsty sea of men, women and children passing perilously through a vast unchartered jungle, infested by wild beasts and surrounded by snakes and scorpions, gripped by fear, dreaded by enemies, scared by treacherous turns, haunted by spectres, leaping from crag to crag, dodging danger after danger, till they reached the land of hope, the haven of their heart. Referring to this exodus which, in fact, was a war of extermination, Quaid-i-Azam warned, "Time and history will also record its verdict on those whose treachery and machinations let loose forces of disorder and disruption in this subcontinent causing the death of lakhs, enormous destruction of property and bringing about suffering and misery to millions by uprooting them from their homes and hearths and all that was dear to them. The systematic massacre of defenceless and innocent people puts to shame even the most heinous atrocities committed by the worst tyrants known to history."

Having done all this, the Indian leaders clamoured for war against Pakistan as they had 'enough of resources and more than enough of manpower.' Others pleaded for 'economic sanctions' and 'retaliatory measures', short of war. What is more, they told the marooned Muslims that 'the State could not protect them with their police and army.' But these threats cut no ice; the spirit of the people triumphed; Pakistan survived in spite of 'unparalleled difficulties and untold suffering.'

Wrapped in swaddling clothes, Pakistan found that a barricade had been erected at every strategic point. The refugees were pouring; baggage trains were burnt, means of communications were dislocated; trade and commerce had come to a standstill; and the administrative machinery nearly broke down. It was such a catastrophic situation that 'the entire structure of the State might have crumbled down.' As a foreign observer put it, "The new India suffered in the transition but Pakistan was virtually shattered. India inherited a working federal capital with the majority of the cabinet and other public servants willing to continue at their posts. Pakistan had to create a new capital and a new government. India had large areas which were substantially untouched by partition; the Central Provinces, Madras, Mysore, Bombay and other large units were preserved from chaos. In Pakistan there were few such areas of relative tranquillity. Pakistan consisted of half of Bengal, without its capital and major city; half of the

Punjab where the capital city was devastated by fire and riot.

"The whole structure of government had to be improvised. Pakistan took over the provincial government of Sind and the North-West Frontier Province, but the non-Muslim civil servants were transferred to India. In any event these were small and relatively backward provinces. The Punjab was partitioned, and although its capital, Lahore, fell to Pakistan a large proportion of its administrators had been Hindus and Sikhs. And the city itself being less than 20 miles from the Indian border had to bear the full impact of the disruption that accompanied partition. East Bengal was even less well provided with an operating government. The provincial capital had been Calcutta and the main composition of its administration had been Hindu. The new provincial government had to operate at a distance of more than 1 000 miles from the federal capital. In addition to the creation or re-modelling of the provincial governments, Pakistan had to produce in a few weeks a complete central government for a nation of 75,000,000 people.

"Furthermore, this task had to be accomplished at a time of social and political disorder. The economic structure of the new state was almost totally disrupted. Normal lines of communication were severed. All the complex machinery of trade and commerce had to be divorced from its Indian connections and be re-establish-

ed in conformity with new and arbitrary political boundaries.

"As an added and most severe burden upon the overstrained economy came the refugees. They came by the million, most of them with nothing but a few rags and a small bundle of personal possessions. They flowed toward the towns where temporary relief camps were established and where some kind of free accommodation and sustenance was available.

"When the public services were divided in 1947 Pakistan was in an extremely poor position. India assumed authority over six major provinces whose territory remained undivided and whose governments maintained relatively smooth operations. Pakistan contained two unpartitioned provinces, Sind and the North-West Frontier Province, each of which was small and neither of which had a full independent cadre of senior civil servants. The impact of physical dislocation was therefore much more serious in Pakistan. Most of the normal requirements of government for buildings, office equipment and records were lacking. In New Delhi, while there was considerable initial confusion, it could at least be known that a ministry existed at a definite place and had a telephone number and an officer in charge. In Karachi no such essential minimum could be guaranteed. Government had to be improvised by men

sitting on packing-cases, writing notes to each other in pencil."

India used every weapon in her armoury to stifle Pakistan, though each time she tried to hit, she was hit back like a ball bounced by the sheer force of reaction. When India had her fling and Pakistan did not crash, she came out with the last arrow in her quiver. "With all the wealth of argument and detail, which malice could invent or ill-will devise", the Indian leaders predicted 'that Pakistan would be left bankrupt; and what the fire and sword of the enemy could not achieve, would be brought about by the ruined finances of the State'. They hoped that 'economic manoeuvres' would strangle the new State because the liquid financial resources of Pakistan had touched the lowest level. It will be recalled that at the time of partition Pakistan had initially received Rs. 20 crores as a working balance and its share of the undivided assets was to be fixed later. Following a financial agreement with India this share was fixed at Rs. 75 crores. As Pakistan had already received 20 crores, the balance of 55 crores was due to be paid in December 1947. But reports emanating from New Delhi said that the implementation of the recent agreement arrived at between the two Dominions about the division of assets and liabilities and the immediate payment of Rs. 55 crores to Pakistan would depend on a 'satisfactory solution of the Kashmir affair.' It was naked coercion clothed as a bait which we spurned. Pakistan

suffered a loss of Rs. 55 crores rather than sign the Kashmir sale deed in favour of India. It was pointed out that "the agreement recently arrived at between the two Dominions has nothing to do with the settlement of the Kashmir or any other political problem, and that if the Government of India go back on their pledged word they would be guilty of a gross breach of faith."

Unable to dent Pakistan's resolute stand on the Kashmir issue, India manoeuvred to secure the State's accession nine weeks after partition. It was not only a cold-blooded conspiracy to create a situation which should clear the decks for India's annexation of Kashmir but turned out to be a well laid anti-Pakistan plot.

According to the Indian Independence Act, paramountcy of His Majesty's Government over the Indian Princely States was to lapse on 15 August 1947, when the subcontinent was partitioned and two sovereign States came into being. The States were given the option to accede to India or Pakistan. But, this legal aspect apart, Lord Mountbatten, the last British Viceroy and Governor-General of India, advised the rulers of the States to decide the accession issue after duly considering the geographical location of their States, the communal composition of their population, economic and allied factors, and the wishes of their people. Thus, it was expected that Kashmir would naturally and automatically accede to Pakistan, not only because the people and

political parties in the State supported this accession, but it was thought that any other course of action would lead to calamitous consequences. All factors were in favour of accession to Pakistan; but the Maharaja behaved and acted differently. He ignored geographical considerations, disregarded the communal character of the population, spurned the wishes of his people and forgot all the natural factors that made Kashmir and West Pakistan an indivisible economic unit.

The Maharaja was playing with fire; he was told by Lord Mountbatten to accede in time, that is, before August 15. But he began to mark time, prolong the matter and did not even take the risk of discussing the question with those who might persuade him to let his State accede to Pakistan. Lord Mountbatten visited Kashmir in the third week of June and, as the chronicler of his mission puts it, "When he got there he found the Maharaja politically very elusive and the only conversations that took place were during their various car drives together. Mountbatten on these occasions urged him and his Prime Minister, Pandit Kak, not to make any declaration of independence, but to find out in one way or another the will of the people of Kashmir as soon as possible, and to announce their intention by 14th of August, to send representatives accordingly to one Constituent Assembly or the other. He told them that the newly-created States Department of India was prepared to give an assurance that if Kashmir went to Pakistan

this would not be regarded as an unfriendly act by the Government of India. He went on to stress the dangerous situation in which Kashmir would find itself if it lacked the support of one of the two Dominions by the date of the transfer of power. His intention was to give this advice privately to the Maharaja alone and then to repeat it in the presence of his Prime Minister with George Abell (Private Secretary to the Viceroy) and the Resident, Colonel Webb, in attendance, at a small meeting where minutes could be kept.

"The Maharaja suggested that the meeting should take place on the last day of the visit, to which Mountbatten agreed, feeling that this would allow him the maximum chance to make up his mind, but when the time came the Maharaja sent a message that he was in bed with colic and would be unable to attend the meeting. It seems that this is his usual illness when he wishes to avoid difficult discussions."

There are at least five reasons to believe that he avoided discussion because, from the very beginning, he had no intention of acceding to Pakistan and, what is more, the Indian leaders knew it and encouraged him to play this perilous game of procrastination.

(1) Instead of acceding immediately to Pakistan, he concluded a standstill agreement with it. It was a lure to serve the purpose of a lull—to create a false sense of security among the Muslims who were made to believe

• that the agreement was the first step towards Kashmir's ultimate accession to Pakistan.

(2) Meanwhile, the Maharaja acquired the services of R.S.S. gangs and other militant Hindu and Sikh groups to comb the State of all pro-Pakistan elements before he announced accession to India.

(3) During this period Gandhi and other Congress leaders visited Srinagar, and met the Maharaja. These mysterious moves later confirmed Pakistan's suspicions that there were no gentlemanly negotiations to decide what was right and proper to do in the circumstances, but that the stage was being set for a shady bargain with the Hindu Congress leaders to be announced at the appropriate psychological moment.

(4) Furthermore, during these weeks, it was reported that, "The Kashmir Government has confirmed the news that it is linking the State, via Pathankot, with the East Punjab, and throwing a bridge over the River Ravi. The work is already proceeding at top speed. Temporary arrangements are also under way to make it possible for vehicles and other transport to cross the Ravi. In short, every effort is being made to render the State independent of the two existing arteries of communications that link Kashmir with the outside world. Both of these run through Pakistan."

(5) The indecent haste with which the Government of India accepted the accession offer conclusively

proved their complicity in this premeditated plan. The Indian National Congress had always held the view that "on the lapse of paramountcy sovereign rights in Indian States should revert to the people," and it was for this reason that they opposed Junagadh's accession to Pakistan.

All these facts were revealed not only by the reports that reached Pakistan during those momentous months but by the dispatches sent by foreign correspondents to their newspapers.

It is often asked why and how Lord Mountbatten accepted the responsibility for Kashmir's accession to India, in spite of his known views on the subject. "Why, for example", it is asked, 'did he advise that Indian military assistance to the Maharaja must be covered by the legal technicality of accession?' How could he have reasoned that it would be illegal for Kashmir (which was at the time of invasion technically an independent country) to ask for military help from India without preceding the request by accession? He must have assumed that the Pakistan Government would refuse in any case to recognise the legality of such accession brought about without prior determination of the will of the Kashmiri people. He must have known that if war over this issue were to develop between these two Dominions, it would not be on the basis of the legality of such a method of accession but rather over the fact

itself. Why was there at this point no appeal made to the United Nations from either the technically independent Government of Kashmir or from Delhi? The record reveals no hint that such a possibility was even mentioned. But, finally, it is most difficult to understand why no one, particularly Mountbatten, advanced the most obvious idea, that of immediately getting into contact with the Karachi Government for consultation."

While we leave these debatable points to be settled by future historians, the fact remains that the Maharaja's act of accession to India was the beginning of a life or death struggle for Pakistan. The Maharaja's fateful decision to accede to India was an open invitation to bullet, though even before he took this action his intentions were known and the people had risen in revolt and formed a free Government of their own. But his formal and fraudulent offer of accession to India was a signal for a popular upheaval, the start of a mighty freedom movement. The smouldering embers burst into a flame of rebellion when the British quit the subcontinent and India and Pakistan were born as two independent States. The hour had struck; the time was ripe; the State was seething with discontent, the people were ready to resist, and when the Maharaja's men asked Muslims to surrender arms, the choice was between life and death. The Kashmiri veterans and ex-servicemen of the Second World War became the spearhead of the struggle, and small resistance groups began to grow

everywhere. The Maharaja was alarmed by the reports of civil disobedience in Poonch and the complete rout of the Dogra troops in Mirpur, Muzaffarabad and Bagh. With the arrival of tribal warriors and Punjab volunteers, the Azad Kashmir forces were reinforced and it became an all-out fight. The panicky Maharaja fled from Srinagar and took shelter in Jammu.

But, as the movement gained momentum, more and more Muslims were either massacred or driven to Pakistan borders. It was authoritatively reported that "the Muslim personnel of the State military and police were either disarmed or arrested; several high officials were dismissed and hundreds of political workers were put behind the bars; in Baramulla and Rampur, many people were shot dead on the suspicion that they were welcoming the armies of liberation; a reign of terror had been let loose against the Muslims who were being killed by the Sikhs, Hindus and State troops, supported by R.S.S. brigands who had come to Kashmir for this specific purpose."

As this communal carnage was on, Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah, Governor-General of Pakistan, suggested three steps to effect a peaceful settlement of the dispute, at a meeting with Lord Mountbatten on November 1.

"1. To put an immediate stop to fighting, the two Governors-General should be authorized and vested

with full powers by both Dominion Governments to issue a proclamation forthwith giving forty-eight hours' notice to the two opposing forces to cease fire. We have no control over the forces of the Provisional (Azad) Government of Kashmir or the tribesmen engaged in the fighting, but we will warn them in the clearest terms that if they do not obey the order to ceasefire immediately the forces of both Dominions will make war on them.

"2. Both the forces of Indian Dominion and the tribesmen to withdraw simultaneously and with the utmost expedition from Jammu and Kashmir State territory.

"3. With the sanction of the two Dominion Governments, the two Governors-General to be given full powers to restore peace, undertake the administration of Jammu and Kashmir State, and arrange for a plebiscite without delay under their joint control and supervision."

It is not known for what reasons Lord Mountbatten expressed his inability to accept the proposal.

Thus, there was no end to bloodshed and Muslim refugees continued to pour into Pakistan. But, in April, 1948, there was a sudden shift in the scene when the Indian troops began a blitzkrieg with the avowed object of destroying all opposition and make the occupation of the State "an accomplished fact." It was a serious situa-

tion when they were within striking distance of the Jhelum canal headworks, situated near the Pakistan border. Thus, in May, 1948, the Pakistan troops entered the Azad Kashmir territory as a purely defensive measure to ward off any possible Indian inroads into Pakistan.

As the Kashmir issue was hanging fire, India opened yet another front and Pakistan suddenly found itself fighting another battle—the battle for water. When the hot weather was setting in, the "Sikh engineers in charge of the headworks situated in East Punjab turned off the taps" and the Bari Doab Canal which supplied water to Lahore District dried up. An Inter-Dominion conference had to be hurriedly held in New Delhi to settle "Pakistan's riparian and irrigation rights." Pakistan claimed that the rivers of the subcontinent which irrigate lands in both the Dominions "are the common property of the two Dominions", but India claimed to control all the rivers of the Indus basin. What made the situation still graver was India's declared plans and projects to appropriate the whole supply by an elaborate system of link canals in East Punjab, with nothing but dry river beds for Pakistan. Particularly, the issues raised by India about the distribution of the waters of two Eastern rivers (Ravi and Sutlej) confronted Pakistan with a situation which could shatter our economy to pieces.

Thus, the circumstances that accompanied the partition of the subcontinent is a story of a series of attempts to undo Pakistan before it became strong and stable. Boundary line questions, evacuee property issues, trade barriers, withholding our due share in undivided India's archives, museums, official records, railway stores, ordnance factories and finally the Kashmir and canal water disputes—all these were understood to be vital ingredients of a design to make Pakistan ripe for ruin.

As Pakistan was being hit by missiles from all sides, a people were being ushered into the portals of a mansion they had only seen in their dreams. The dream came true, they founded a State, they became free nationals of a free country. The battle was won, but the enemy thought that the war had not ended. How the people rose to meet the challenge and heroically faced all hazards and hardships, is a saga of faith and fortitude which I can hardly relate and you can hardly read without feeling a lump in your throat.

Here are a few shining incidents, based on personal experience and on the testimony of officers who were in charge of evacuation work during the fateful months that followed Partition.

During the days when Indira intensified her campaign against the Azad Kashmir fighters, a poorly clad middle-aged man, walked into the office of Civil Defence Director

n Lahore and handed over a bag containing Rs. 1,100. As he put it, "This is my lifesaving; it is my donation to the Kashmir cause; Pakistan Zindabad."

Some time in September 1947, a party of Police officers found a congregation of about 6000 armed men, between Jhang and Lyallpur, poised for an attack on scattered pockets of Hindus and Sikhs in order to avenge the ghastly and gruesome happening in East Punjab where hundreds and thousands of Musalmans were done to death. One of the Police officers stepped forward and, addressing the crowd, posed a question, "How can you do such a thing; you are the followers of Islam which enjoins upon you to protect the minorities." They all began to weep and cried, "We shall protect them, even if it costs us our own lives."

Somewhere in Montgomery District, the evacuee Hindus and Sikhs broke the canal bund at several points to cause an artificial inundation of the area and damage the standing crops. The local Muslims repaired the breaches in five days; it would have cost the Government five lakhs and taken five months. For them, the State of Pakistan was not a vague or remote entity; it was a personal thing, nearest their heart; whatever belonged to the State belonged to them and they must look after State property just as they guarded their own property.

Partition had almost paralysed the economic life of north-west Pakistan. There was acute shortage of imported goods, but few felt this scarcity. An old woman went to a ration shop and asked for sugar. The shopkeeper told her that there was no imported white sugar but only Pakistan-made brown sugar. "Even if you had white sugar, I would not have it", she exclaimed. Taking a handful of brown sugar, she lifted it to her eyes, kissed it and said, "It has such a tempting colour; it resembles the sacred soil of Pakistan."

The most powerful Government in the world could not overnight settle more than four million destitute refugees who entered Pakistan in less than four weeks; but a determined people always take over where a government fails.. The local Muslims and refugees acted as limbs of a body, with their spirits merged, they became partners in an achievement which fulfilled the promise of Pakistan. It was a union of hearts, an open embrace which knew no bounds even the poorest sections of the population in the towns and villages of Punjab shared their meagre belongings with the incoming refugees—their kucha houses and handspun clothes, their bamboo cots and earthenwares. It was found that even those who could scarcely make both ends meet missed a meal and fed their refugee brothers for days and months.

Wagha, one of the historic bifurcating points between Pakistan and India, became the scene of spiritual adven-

tures which neither the fine artistry of the poet nor the professional craft of the chronicler can clothe in words. Huge caravans of men, women and children prostrated on the bare, burning ground, as they set their blistered feet on the soil of Pakistan. How most of them could survive the risks and rigours of a long trekking journey staggered imagination; and how they fell and died the moment they landed in Pakistan is a phenomenon which transcends the common human understanding. Here is the story of ho y, hoary man who defied death—till he reached Pakistan. During his first visit to Lahore, after partition, the Quaid-i-Azam visited a refugee camp and was deeply moved by the sight of mourning men, wailing women and shrieking children.. An old man had died and his body was being taken for burial. "How did he die", enquired the Quaid i-Azam. He was attacked, wounded, draped in blood, but there was a hope in his heart which continued to feed him; it was the passion to see Pakistan with his own eyes. The moment he crossed the frontier, he expired, under his flag, on his land, with his eyes wide open, as if nothing could ever disturb his panoramic view of Pakistan from the other world. With a glossy look in his monocled eye, the Quaid-i-Azam said. "These people can never die."

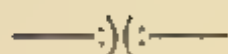
This was the spark that lit the fire of freedom; this was the spirit bequeathed to us by Pakistanis who died in the womb of the State that was struggling to be born. They died that we may live; they perished that we may

prosper. . But the men who wore the crown, after Quaid-i-Azam, made a selfish use of the power that belonged to the people and converted "a perfectly sound country", to quote President Ayub, "into a laughing stock." Every generation makes a contribution to posterity, but they gave birth to hate, despair and bankruptcy. The sphere of their life was circumscribed to amassing wealth, pursuing pleasure and concentrating power.

Some of them were so dazed by the first flush of power that they lost their head; others had perhaps no head to lose and we might take a lenient view of their deeds, for they had no deeds to their credit. If the sins of omission are not as serious as the sins of commission, we have to dispose of another class of politicians who had both ability and integrity but they were swept off by the dangerous policy of drift. They were so anxious to make virtue of a vice that they ended up by doing a good thing in a bad way. Thus, paradoxically enough, in the strength of their known qualities lay the weakness of their character.

Were they too small for the big tasks that lay ahead? They could surely not rise beyond their destined stature; but they were dwarfed, every day, by their own doings. Having quelled the qualms of their conscience, they were in ceaseless search of an abracadabra which could keep them entrenched in power and hide their hideous ways of governing a country.

Their misrule and misdeeds need not be magnified , even as they cannot be minimised. Here is a candid report on the betrayal of the first revolution—the revolution wrought by Pakistan fifteen years ago. It does not pretend to be a microscopic scrutiny of all that has happened during all these years, though it might give you a clear and kaleidoscopic view of events which culminated in the October Revolution.





PART II

CHAPTER III

MAKING A CONSTITUTION

"Our constitution will be a democratic type, embodying the essential principles of Islam. ."

— Quaid-i-Azam



MAKING A CONSTITUTION

Despite all the problems and difficulties which beset Pakistan during the months following the partition of the subcontinent, the people expected the Constituent Assembly to schedule the work of constitution-making and treat it as a priority job. The Government of India Act 1935 which governed us even after 1947 was not only repugnant to our national character but failed to respond to our growing needs and necessities. The dynamics of the independence movement demanded a constitution which should not only embody the spirit and genius of our freedom struggle but project our social aims and political ideals to a world torn by ideological conflicts. Thus, it was a question of national pride and personality, for a country's constitution is like the anatomy of the State without which the body-politic can not acquire its proper norm and natural shape. But, soon after Quaid-i-Azam's death, the enthusiasm of the builders began to effervesce and they took it as a casual assignment for leisure hours. From the time of its inauguration up to the end of its seven-year life, the first Constituent Assembly held only 16 sessions, met for 116 days, the average attendance ranging from 37 to 56, out of a total of 79 seats. During the same period, the legislative part of this duplex body met for 244 days, the lowest attendance being 37 and the highest 57.

But it was not merely a case of poor attendance, wastage of time or prolonging the process of constitution-framing; membership of the Assembly became a money-making pastime and, for some, there was no alternative or easier source of income. We hardly expected them to show any missionary spirit, as they were well paid for the job; but they became stark mercenaries and appraised their service in terms of salaries and special allowances. Besides a monthly salary of Rs. 400, they enjoyed a free railway and steamer pass valid throughout the year and for the whole of Pakistan. The members from East Pakistan were given three return air tickets in a year whether the Assembly was in session or not. What is more, the members could draw first class travelling allowance, whatever the class by which they travelled. If a Government servant travels by third class and draws travelling allowance for first class to which he is entitled, he is liable to be dismissed. But the members were not only paid on a monthly basis and given free passage but claimed travelling allowance which is 'intended to be re-imbursed to a person for the expenditure incurred on travelling'. Thus, a member from a distant place like Chittagong literally got away with Rs. 2,000 whenever he happened to visit Karachi and attend the Assembly session or a Committee meeting. They even arranged meetings according to a schedule which gave them a chance to come back soon and make a little extra money.

As time rolled by, the tasks of preparing a written constitution became more and more intricate and yet, in the beginning, it was simpler as, in spite of geographical factors and linguistic differences, we were knit together by a common struggle and an abiding faith. A proper constitution, in time, could be a powerful lever in promoting national integration but the search for it nearly ruptured our basic unity and created schisms which grew with every attempt to improvise a bridge between the contending groups. Every compromise proved a prelude to a new complexity; the difficulties multiplied and it appeared as if we had to start all over again. The work of constitution-making was deadlocked by provincial rivalries and political jockeying, confounded by the Islamic State controversy and marred by litigation and legal polemics. With every constitutional crisis and change of government, there was a new promise to the people, a new date with the people but, each time, it proved to be a new conspiracy against the people.

For 18 months, after Quaid-i-Azam departed, the Constituent Assembly transacted no business except fixation of pay and allowances for ministers and Governor-General and passing the Bill which came to be known as the Public and Representative Officers Disqualification Act. The Objectives Resolution was adopted on 7 March 1949 and all that followed was "in the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful..." On 12 March 1949 the motion on the appointment of the Basic

Principles Committee was passed. But a year passed before the initial recommendations of the Committee on Basic Principles and Fundamental Rights appeared in the press. There was countrywide condemnation of the Report which its authors tried to present as an 'Islamic document.' The following excerpt from an article I wrote sums up the typical reaction to the published version of the Report:

"This blue-print of Pakistan's future constitutional structure is an affront to the people, an insult to democracy, a challenge to posterity. It is a negation of human rights and a slap in the face of freedom. It represents an ingenious attempt to forge afresh the chains of slavery and confine liberty in a medieval dungeon. It is, at best, a mongrel document, with all the good things gone and bad things borrowed. They have reduced Fundamental Rights to a sham and made a mockery of Basic Principles. The least we expected was that they would incorporate in their reports the universally recognised democratic and constitutional principles and practices. Do they expect the common man to welcome these recommendations, because they are supposed to be based on 'Islamic law'?"

This was the beginning of a controversy about the Islamic pattern of Pakistan which cost the country so much in terms of a drift policy at home and an adverse public opinion abroad. What was the genesis of the demand for an Islamic State?

(1) During the pre-partition struggle period, our plea for Pakistan was widely interpreted as a plea for Islam, a plea for a way of life which is in complete accord with our laws and institutions, our ethical system and cultural traditions, our ideological aims and ideas.

(2) After the birth of Pakistan, our leaders' professed adherence to the requirements of a truly Islamic State was welcomed by the Muslims but, as in the past, all such declarations were understood to be, even by our friends abroad, as a camouflage for a theocratic State.

(3) Thanks to these doubts and misgivings, our leaders had to restate the ideological character of Pakistan to convince the world that there was nothing wrong with us. On his return from Delhi some time in 1950 Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan declared in the Assembly that Pakistan was destined to be a hundred per cent modern, democratic State.

(4) Tragically enough, this pronouncement by the head of the Government was again construed—or misconstrued—to mean by certain elements as a departure from the stand which our leaders had taken before and after the birth of Pakistan. It was even represented as a reversal of all the arguments we employed to explain the *raison d'être* of Pakistan.

No wonder, this situation led many a foreign observer to depict Pakistan as a country which seemed,

- years after Independence, at the parting of the Islamic ways. The simple fact that foreigners began to see in Pakistan a struggle raging between those who want a 'progressive modern State' and those who will not be satisfied with anything less than a 'fully Islamic State' showed that the ruling politicians had grievously blundered in the presentation of Pakistan as an Islamic country. To the more extreme of our critics, Pakistan appeared as a country where fanaticism was swallowed as food, where orthodoxy was preached as a code, where bigotry was practised as an art and where religion was administered as a dope. They had hardly any hesitation in referring to us as a nation of religious fanatics and sentimental fools who were so inseparably allied to the Islamic way of life that they did not even want to profit from Western advances in the economic and political field.

Thus, without understanding the constitutional implications of an Islamic State and defining its workable basis, they played with the religious passions of the people but, having reached the Islamic summit, they discovered that the ladder by which they had ascended the height was too risky for a come-down. They failed to take the cue from Quaid-i-Azam's historic remarks when, speaking in the Constituent Assembly on 11 August 1947, he said, "If you work in co-operation, forgetting the past, burying the hatchet, you are bound to succeed; if you change your past and work together

in a spirit that everyone of you, no matter to what community he belongs, is first second and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make. .we are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the State. I think we should keep that in front as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State."

Again, In the course of a broadcast to the people of the United States, seven months later, he observed: "Islam and its idealism have taught us Democracy; it has taught equality of man, justice and fair play to everybody. We are inheritors of these glorious traditions and are fully alive to our responsibilities and obligations as framers of the future Constitution of Pakistan." Thus, Quaid-I-Azam believed that the Islamic principles of equality, fraternity and social justice were in no way antithetical to the ideals of a democratic polity. The broad general principles of Islam could hardly be at variance with the modern democratic concept of a government, but the politicians promised the people a hundred per cent 'Islamic constitution'; without consi-

dering the pragmatic content and practical implications of the demand, they committed themselves to an obligation which they found more and more difficult to fulfil. The question was not whether an Islamic State was desirable; the question was not even whether an Islamic State was possible or not. The real question was: How could we make it possible in a democratic way, that is, how could we secure the largest measure of agreement on the constitutional foundations of an Islamic State? Could we imagine such a State if we were conscious of (a) diverse interpretations of what is popularly understood by 'Islamic law'; (b) conflicting views on the raw material which could be utilised for framing an 'Islamic constitution'; and (c) almost insuperable difficulty of securing agreement on the choice of men who are considered qualified and competent by the general body of Musalmans to say the last word on the subject.

Thus, the debate on the supposed 'Islamic constitution' was conducted in an atmosphere which prompted many to inquire: Is an Islamic State possible? Was there ever an Islamic State? Will an Islamic State be modern? To some, these queries appeared to be sacrilegiously-worded but the fact is that there was no clear and convincing reply to these challenging questions.

The authors of the first BPC Report were so scared of criticism and perhaps felt so guilty that they persuaded members of the Constituent Assembly "not to take into consideration" the Report during the summer

session of 1950. It was after 30 months that the second BPC Report was presented to the Assembly and released to the press but its consideration was further postponed though the Prime Minister declared that it was "fairly well received" and there were 'one or two questions' to be settled. One of these questions was that of an Ulema Board which was to be empowered to judge whether a piece of legislation was repugnant to the Quran and the Sunnah. The proposal could not be entertained for a moment; its acceptance would have inevitably led to the creation of a super-sovereign body sitting in judgement on the actions of people's elected representatives whose collective and institutional expression in most of the democratic countries is the national parliament. If they had recognised the Ulema for constitution-making purposes we had to discard the normally accepted democratic principles and prepare to throw ourselves at the disposal of men who were not even elected by the people. The Ulema Board was abolished but it was suggested that a supreme court manned by two Ulema and one judge should examine deviations from Islam in the light of Quran and Sunnah. As they tried to define the powers and purview of this Ulema-led supreme court, it appeared that their jurisdiction would extend to all departments of life not a pie could be spent, not a Bill could be passed and not a bullet could be fired without the previous sanction of this body. To the enlightened people of Pakistan, it was

, a tragic revival of the debunked theory of divine right. It was an anachronistic cry in the modern world to demand the creation of a body which was not answerable to the electorate and responsive to the people's will. To quote Quaid-i-Azam again, "Pakistan is not going to be a theocratic State to be ruled by priests with a divine mission. We have many non-Muslims—Hindus, Christians and Parsis—but they are all Pakistanis. They will enjoy the same rights and privileges as any other citizen and will play their rightful part in the affairs of Pakistan."

Thus, the Ulema were discredited as a body of law makers and legislators but the search continued for a constitutional formula within the Islamic premises. The second BPC Report was out, but there were so many hitches and hurdles that its consideration was twice postponed during 1953. At last a "consideration motion" was passed on 26 October 1953; the Report was adopted on 2 September 1954; and a drafting committee was set up. Before the final draft was ready for presentation, a Bill was moved by a member to curtail the powers of the Governor-General. The Governor-General was not in Karachi, with their eyes on the clock and ears on the telephone, they discussed the Bill clause by clause and passed it the same day. They were so determined to get through the Bill that they discarded the normal rules of procedure which required that copies of a Bill should be available for use by the members three days before it is considered. Back in the Federal Capital, the Gover-

nor-General hit back; the Constituent Assembly was dissolved on 24 October 1954. The Proclamation read, "The Governor-General having considered the political crisis with which the country is faced, has with deep regret come to the conclusion that the constitutional machinery has broken down. He therefore has decided to declare a state of emergency throughout Pakistan. The Constituent Assembly as at present constituted has lost the confidence of the people and can no longer function."

Thus, a new chapter was opened and we saw the unique spectacle of political battles being fought in courts of law. The President of the Constituent Assembly, Moulvi Tamizuddin Khan, denied that the Governor-General had the power to dissolve the Assembly and petitioned the Sind Chief Court 'to issue a writ of mandamus and also a writ of quo warranto against the Ministers of the Central Government who were not qualified as Ministers'. The Chief Court held that the Acts of the Assembly, when it did not function as the Federal Legislature, did not require the Governor-General's assent. As the dissolution of the Assembly was held illegal, the "Federation of Pakistan and others" hastened to file an appeal in the Federal Court of Pakistan pleading 'that the Governor-General was competent to dissolve the Constituent Assembly and in the circumstances had rightly dissolved it.' As the case was caught in the labyrinthine teeth of law, the issue to be settled was

whether the Constituent Assembly was sovereign with or without the Governor-General. In the opinion of the Chief Justice, 'it is a mistake to suppose that sovereignty in its larger sense was conferred upon the Constituent Assembly, or that it could function outside the limits of the Indian Independence Act. The only power given to that Assembly was the power to make laws, constitutional or federal. In the former case, it exercised the power to make provision as to the constitution of the Dominion which had been included in the generality of the powers conferred by Section 6 on the legislature of the Dominion, and in the latter it acted as the Federal Legislature with all the limitations to which that Legislature was subject. Apart from these powers it had no other power and it lived in a fool's paradise if it was ever seized with the notion that it was the sovereign body in the State. It had, of course, legislative sovereignty as the legislature of the Dominion but then the Governor-General was a constituent part of the Legislature. Every Act passed by it required the Governor-General's assent consistently with the position that prevails throughout the Dominions, the Colonies and the Possessions, settled or ceded or conquered, where the Crown still retains to itself or has delegated to its representative the high prerogative right of assenting to bills. On its interpretation of the Indian Independence Act, the Constituent Assembly attempted to function outside the Constitution, and it was the right not only of the Governor-General to object to such

unconstitutional activity, but the right of every citizen in the State to demand that the Assembly must function within its constitutional limits. The members of the Assembly before they undertake the duties of their office take the oath of allegiance to the Constitution of Pakistan, and they are subject to all the limitations of that Constitution. Having taken the oath, they cannot subsequently forswear themselves and assert that they are the only sovereign body in the State and that their will is the law whether the Governor-General endorses or does not endorse that will."

This judgement and the Report on the Special Reference made by the Governor-General, besides the case of *Usif Patel vs. The Crown*, were regarded by foreign jurists as 'of the first importance for constitutional lawyers, historians of modern Asian politics, legislators and students of Commonwealth relations.' These court cases were perhaps of profound academic interest to some foreign observers but, for the people of Pakistan, this litigation business not only halted constitutional progress but exposed us to world ridicule and created many a paradox and peculiar situations. Thus, the legality of Karachi's separation from Sind was challenged and the city was claimed to be a part of the Province. Qazi Fazlullah claimed that he was still the Home Minister of Sind. A number of black marketing cases were being argued as *ultra vires*. It is said that law is an ass but, here, it conferred so much stupidity

on the masters who owned it that it appeared difficult to decide who made a fool of whom. In one of the cases, the Chief Justice picturesquely presented the issue in the form of three alternatives: (1) to turn back the way we came by; (2) to cross the gap by a legal bridge; (3) to hurtle into the chasm beyond any hope of rescue. You could not say that the politicians gave us no choice !

Was the Constituent Assembly a sovereign body? If it was sovereign, how could it be dissolved? If it enjoyed this position for a limited period, that is, for the purposes of drafting the constitution, at what particular moment it was necessary for the cession of sovereignty to the people? But all these discourses on the legality, validity or constitutional propriety of what was happening in the country could not be divorced from the patriotic duty and moral responsibility which the ruling gentry owed to the people of Pakistan. No amount of legal whitewashing, academic clothing and juristic decoration could cover or condone the conduct of men who could pass a Bill in a day for reasons of political vendetta, but took seven years to submit the Report on Basic Principles and Fundamental Rights.

When this act of the play was over, and a new Constituent Assembly was in the offing, the same actors appeared after an intriguing interval and promised to deal with the constitutional issues 'afresh', to hold elections 'as early as possible', give the country 'a vigorous and stable administration', and subordinate 'all

personal, sectional and provincial interests to the supreme national interest.' What followed? The constitutional surveyors started with the Objectives Resolution, elections receded like a mirage, weak tottering governments came in quick succession and parochial politics broke the spine and ribs of the nation.

Following the Convention, the inaugural session of the second Constituent Assembly was held on the heights of Murree in July 1955. The newly 'chosen representatives of the people' shouted from hill tops that they would produce a constitution before the year was out. In fact, they were trying to deliver what was largely conceived by the old Constituent Assembly. Thus, they substantially adopted 245 articles of the first draft constitution. But, perhaps, their real difficulty was born of the weakness inherent in any coalition Government. Gone were the days when the Muslim League was in a commanding majority; it was not merely securing the support of United Front and Muslim League but appeasing the loud splinter groups within the two coalescing parties. They could not discard the federal form of constitution as it was a 'dictate of geography', but a quarrel started over the quantum of representation in the National Parliament. Territorially speaking, East Pakistan was one-seventh of Pakistan's total area but its people outnumbered the combined population of the Provinces and States of West Pakistan. As, in the past, members from one or two minor provinces of West

- Pakistan often lined up with East Pakistan representatives, this question always degenerated into a Bengali-Punjabi controversy. The prospects of an early settlement were bleak; they realized that the quickest way to resolve the issues and iron out difficulties was outside the Assembly; the coalition partners must find a solution before the storm overtook them. But, even this was found to be too risky and cumbersome a procedure and the group leaders were asked to get together.. They hit upon an agreed formula, let us give equal representation to East and West Pakistan. It was the old parity principle which had been twice suggested as early as 1952.

But, after the unification of West Pakistan on 30 September 1955, this provincial representation controversy assumed a new menacing meaning when they revealed the demand for regional autonomy. It was not a simple problem of distribution of powers between the Centre and the federating units. They insisted on complete provincial autonomy, granting three subjects to the Centre, namely, Defence, Foreign Affairs and Currency. An Assembly member from East Pakistan even referred to the two parts of Pakistan as 'two countries' inhabited by 'two peoples', the declaration was followed by a threat of secession if the demand was not conceded. If Pakistan had not been a geographically split country, this decentralisation of powers was understandable and even a weak Centre could have been

tolerable. But, in the circumstances, the Centre alone could view things from a larger national angle, study problems on an all-Pakistan basis and enforce decisions after weighing the needs and requirements of the country as a whole. If the two provinces had their way, the Centre would have been like a hen-pecked husband sandwiched between two wives who eternally remind him of the dangers of disobedience. There was no surrender to this mocking show of power politics, though the agitation never died down.

At last, after 8 years, 6 months and 15 days the Constitution Bill was passed. February 29, 1956 was hailed as a red letter day in the history of Pakistan but, according to some, this belated success contained the seeds of failure; the Constitution was so unworkable and full of 'dangerous compromises' that the country was bound to disintegrate. . Whether these fears were justified or not, a more disconcerting factor was that they failed to take a firm and final decision on the electorate issue. Were elections to be held under separate or joint electorate? For advocates of the joint system, any surrender to the demand for separate electorate would upset parity, topple the Constitution and accentuate East-West differences. For upholders of the separate poll method, elections could only be held under joint electorate if we were ready to bury the spirit of Islam and work against the ideology of Pakistan. It is worth examining how and why it became a 'life or death' issue!



CHAPTER VI

ELECTORAL BATTLE

"We are starting with this principle that we are all equal citizens of one State".

--- Qua d-i-Azam



ELECTORAL BATTLE

We have seen how the drama of constitution-making became a baffling burlesque in which every sane argument was caricatured and every appeal to reason was parodied. This drama was enacted for nearly nine years; half of this time was spent in placating the provincial monster and determining the Islamic character of the State, and the other half in recovering from the shock of constitutional crises and the change of Governments. But in spite of the intriguingly long time they took in framing a constitution, the people were wildly jubilant on the day the Constitution Bill was passed, as if a miracle had happened. But it was only a signal for a fierce controversy; it was not the end of a struggle but the beginning of a big new battle. They had failed to settle the poll method. Even if this issue had a potent historical significance, the fact is that it was being debated so hysterically that some of us became sceptical about the good of general elections when we could not reach settlement on the preliminary mechanics of going to the polls. The history of constitution-making in Pakistan is written in shining letters of shame but this shame was perpetuated because the general elections could not be held under the Constitution without deciding the electorate issue. The politicians professed

allegiance to the democratic objective of holding elections but, in fact, they employed every conceivable stratagem to postpone the polls. The issue was never adjoined in terms of national good but discussed as a private affair of a private limited company. In all democratic countries, political and economic issues generate heat which is a barometer of popular and public reactions to the existing situation but in Pakistan they produced gas which showed a state of political dyspepsia.

Thus, they made the electorate issue dangerously important. They made it more important than Kashmir, without which Pakistan continues to be like a house without a roof. They made it more important than canal waters, without which the vast fertile plains of West Pakistan could revert to desert and one-third of its population face starvation. They made it more important than food, on which they continued to spend crores of our precious foreign exchange, year after year, and yet the land in the Ghulam Mohammad Barrage was longing to meet the plough and the water waiting to be released. They made it more important than the colossal problems of poverty, illiteracy and disease which we could only ignore at our peril. They forgot that if at all we have to fight, let us fight the real battle, let us fight on the real fronts. But, for them the electorate issue was a matter of life and death for Pakistan!

The Muslim League leaders seemed passionately wedded to separate electorates: the Awami League

leaders were not prepared at any cost to dissolve the marriage with joint electorates; the Republican leaders could neither openly marry the dame of separate electorates nor divorce the dame of joint electorates, for they would like to assess the public sentiments before committing or breaking matrimony. To the common man, it appeared that both cases were perhaps flawlessly perfect, as the protagonists of both the systems believed that the adoption of the other method would be a disaster for Pakistan. The situation was the same, the history was the same, the facts were the same and yet the advocates of both the systems built up a thesis which was antithesis of each other.

Both invoked the name of the Quaid-i-Azam and copiously quoted from his speeches and statements to prove their contention.

Both believed that their poll method was the greatest guarantee of the unity, solidarity and stability of Pakistan.

For the upholders of separate electorates, their system was in consonance with the spirit that gave birth to Pakistan; for the supporters of joint electorates, the plea for separate electorates was a negation of the ideology of Pakistan.

If Islam was synonymous with the modern concept of democracy, as we all believe it is, we must accept

joint electorates after the birth of Pakistan; the other party believed that since Pakistan had been carved out as a Muslim homeland, they could not discard separate electorates.

The supporters of joint electorates believed that any surrender to the other party would lead to East-West differences; for the votaries of separate electorates, their prescription alone could promote East-West amity and harmony.

According to the believers in separate electorates, the adoption of joint electorates would place the Muslims of East Pakistan at the mercy of Hindus; the other party thought that the adoption of separate electorates would unnecessarily strengthen the bargaining position of Hindus.

The advocates of joint electorates believed that, after the creation of Pakistan, separate electorates were neither necessary nor desirable; the advocates of separate electorates believed that, even after the birth of Pakistan, the change is neither necessary nor desirable.

► The only way to appraise the gravity of the situation created by the electorate issue is to present and examine both the cases. For, thus alone, we can realise the tragicomic character of this controversy and shudder, for a moment, at the consequences if it was allowed to continue.

Why joint electorates? We think that the current controversy on the electorate issue is divorced from realism and is being conducted in a dangerous mental climate, and yet few realise how national good is being subordinated to personal passions and prejudices. Thus, for the protagonists of separate electorates, it is an article of faith, the only constitutional device to save Islam and Pakistan. They have so completely equated the plea for separate electorates with the theology of Islam and ideology of Pakistan that, according to them, all those who oppose it are 'the enemies of the State'. In a country like Pakistan where the majority of the people cannot read and write, it is the patriotic duty of our leaders to educate public opinion. To prefer all kinds of funny and fantastic charges against political rivals, to accuse them of digging the grave of this country and to call them traitors and the enemies of Pakistan is, to put it mildly, creating confusion, misleading public opinion, and deviating from the path of democracy. The simple and humble people of Pakistan are our greatest national asset; let us not exploit them for personal aggrandizement; the religion of Islam is our greatest spiritual anchor sheet; let us not exploit it for political purposes.

Having spread this intellectual chaos and having failed to define the true Islamic character of Pakistan, the Muslim League leaders had no pleasanter pastime than to whip religious frenzy of the people. Their lust

for office has so completely blurred their political vision that they have not only forgotten the rules of the game in their anxiety to bully and brow-beat rival parties but they have even begun to trade on the sacred name of Islam. They have not only started a campaign of calumny against other parties but have begun to wield the bludgeon of Islam to attack their political adversaries. For them, any Islamic stick is good enough to beat the Musalmans with, even at the risk of endangering the stability and integrity of the country. They are singing these hymns of hatred and carrying on this tirade of abuses because they say that the electorate issue is a question of life and death for Pakistan. What is more, they say that the believers in joint electorates are *kafirs* and *murtids*. They have even organised prayers in mosques and hired Imams to carry on this senseless propaganda. The only redeeming feature of the situation is that there are no arguments in their armoury but only invectives! The Head of the Jamaat-i-Islami has even come out with the declaration that he is doing *Jehad* against those who advocate joint electorates.

Who is a Musalman? And who is not a Musalman? What is Islamic? And what is not Islamic? Who is going to settle these issues? We believe that every Musalman is his own Mula and any person who has recited the *Kalima* can claim to be a Musalman. The electorate issue is not a religious matter; and to say that separate electorate is based on Islam is not only a preposterous

plea but a libellous misrepresentation of Islam. And, still more serious is the charge that all those who are opposed to separate electorates are the enemies of Islam and Pakistan. We cannot make a mockery of Islam; we must consider it a sacred trust. We think it is criminal to use Islam for the sake of momentary gains and cheap public applause. They say that "Islam is in danger" because elections are going to be held under joint electorates. In fact, what is in danger is not Islam but the so-called defenders of Islam. So long as the majority of the people inhabiting Pakistan are good Muslims there is no danger to Islam. Islam cannot be saved or served by slogans or shibboleths; the world will judge us in terms of our deeds, not declarations; what we are and not what we claim to be; what we practise and not what we preach.

Let us have a look at history. The Muslim League was founded at Dacca in 1906. This event coincided with the period when lands owned by Bengali Muslims were being handed over by the British to Hindu Revenue Collectors. It was a serious situation as the Musalmans felt that they were not only in danger of losing their economic status but their identity as a people bound together by common cultural ties. Thus, the Muslim League was born of a grim realisation that the only way to safeguard their political future, economic rights and cultural heritage was to have a communal organisation of their own. Ten years later, the Lucknow Pact was signed, and the Congress and the Muslim League agreed on

‘ separate electorate which was incorporated in the Government of India Act, 1919. Thus, the legislative chambers were constituted on the basis of separate electorates and Musaimans felt that they should elect “fighter representatives” who were able to express their point of view. It was then realised that if the elections were held on the basis of joint electorates, Muslims had meagre chance of being returned. And even if a few seats were reserved for them, they could hardly be elected without Hindu support. But even the Quaid-i-Azam considered it a temporary measure for safeguarding our rights. It will be recalled that when he put forward his 14 points, he agreed to give up separate electorate in favour of joint electorate if his three demands, namely, separation of Sind, reform in the North-West Frontier Province and one-third Muslim representation in the legislatures and services, were accepted. But, the Quaid-i-Azam demanded Pakistan when he was convinced that separate electorates had failed to achieve the objectives which had initially led to its demand. Thus, Pakistan is in no way the product of separate electorate; it is, in fact, founded on the failure of separate electorate to fortify our rights. At a time when we were struggling against Hindu domination and foreign rule, separate electorate helped us to demonstrate the will of Indian Musalmans who were able to send their own representatives to the elected bodies, but it proved powerless as a permanent measure for protecting us as a minority community in India.

Let us frankly admit that separate electorate was only a passing phase, and it has lost all meaning after the birth of Pakistan. Let the discerning sections of the Pakistani public opinion dispassionately decide for themselves whether it is "an article of faith" for the Muslims or it is only an election-eye finesse. Many of us still sincerely believe that separate electorate is part of the ideology of Pakistan. We were all brought up in that school, but, after the establishment of Pakistan, let us have the intellectual honesty to recognise that conditions and circumstances which gave birth to the idea of separate electorate have ceased to exist. We have now a State of our own; we are no longer a minority; we are no more struggling to wrest power from the British; and we have no need to fear the Hindus. We are the masters of our own destiny and the captain of our own ship; and whatever we do or decide should be dictated by the larger and lasting interests of the country as a whole.

We do not consider joint electorate as a fundamental issue. But we do believe that joint electorate is necessary to create a proper, well-balanced State in which all citizens have an equal chance to contribute to its welfare. It will be recalled that all efforts at constitution-making fizzled out due to East-West differences. As the East-West gulf widened, there was more bitterness and rancour, more suspicion and distrust, more mutual fear and hatred, and voices were heard that "it would not matter if East Bengal, as it then was, left

Pakistan and only the province of West Pakistan remained as Pakistan." According to West Pakistan representatives in the Assembly, their counterparts from Bengal suffered from 'majority complex' and wanted to establish their permanent supremacy over the whole of Pakistan. The West Pakistanis could not challenge the physical fact of population which gave East Pakistanis a domineering position, but they were constantly in search of a formula which gave an equal status and constitutional strength to both wings of the country. The situation became so serious that the Constituent Assembly was dissolved by late Mr. Ghulam Mohammad. A new Government assumed office and found that the only solution was to have parity between the two wings, even though it was against the accepted maxims of democratic representation in the modern nation states. Thus was born the idea of West Pakistan as One Unit. It was felt that if each wing had an equal representation in the National Parliament, without one commanding or dominating the other, it was imperative that the representatives from West Pakistan should appear as one solid group or party. The fear was not baseless as, in the past, one or the other province of West Pakistan had aligned with East Pakistan. In other words, no East-West equality was possible if a united East Pakistan had always been matched against a divided West Pakistan. As this conception of two compact groups grew, it was realised that joint electorates were inextricably linked with parity and One Unit. Thus, if

you retain parity and discard joint electorate, it could almost be interpreted as a deep-seated design to disrupt East Pakistan. by securing their agreement on parity, East Pakistan's proportionate representation is reduced; by making them accept separate electorate, East Pakistan's political unity is destroyed. The representatives from East Pakistan gave up their numerical superiority, conceded political equality to West Pakistan but separate electorate would condemn it to a subordinate position and turn it into a house divided against itself. Under separate electorate, out of 155 seats for East Pakistan in the Central Legislature, 36 would be allotted to non-Muslims; out of 155 seats for West Pakistan only 5 would go to non-Muslims. Thus, in terms of Muslim strength in the Parliament, West Pakistan was potentially capable of showing more political cohesion and solidarity than East Pakistan. Thus, without joint electorate, no real East-West equality is possible. Parity, joint electorate and One Unit are the three pillars of the constitutional structure which we have erected after repeated failures. Finally, the advocates of separate electorate say that if the elections are held under joint electorate in East Pakistan, it would not only reinforce the Hindu strength in the Provincial Assembly, but Muslims who capture any seats would be "Hinduised." The so-called figures and percentages given in this connection belie the facts and show how baseless are these fears.

Let us take the example of Sylhet which was a

part of Assam province at the time of partition and where the Hindus had well entrenched themselves. This powerful section of Hindus left no stone unturned to keep Sylhet out of Pakistan but the Muslims of this district solidly voted for Pakistan in a referendum held under joint electorate. Again, Muslims and Hindus in Khulna District are about fifty-fifty. Since it was believed that Hindus were in a majority, Khulna was declared a part of India under the notional partition, but the Radcliffe Award gave Khulna to Pakistan. As a result of elections held under separate electorate, there are in the assembly 8 Muslims against 7 Hindu representatives from this district. In the District Board, there are 30 representatives; if there had been separate electorate, it would have had 16 Muslims and 14 non-Muslims and, according to them they would have been all Hindus under joint electorates. When the elections were held under the joint system, 28 Muslims and only 2 Hindus were returned to the District Board. Furthermore, in the District Board of Dinajpur, there were 21 members but, as a result of the elections held under joint electorate, all the seats were captured by Muslims though, under separate electorate, 12 Muslims and 9 Hindus were returned to the Assembly. The Hindu intelligentsia and business class is mostly in towns, but in the Dacca Municipality only one Hindu was returned in a house of 24. This is, briefly, the story of elections in Union Boards, Municipalities, District Boards and School Boards

and yet they continue to depict East Pakistanis as a people who are paying in the hands of Hindus!

Let us not forget that, under the system of separate electorate, we are bound to encourage Hindus to have their own organisations and groupings and pursue their own communal ends without showing that sense of responsibility to Muslim majority which we expect from all people who inhabit Pakistan. In recent years we have seen now some of the elected Hindus reside in Pakistan but have their families in India. Under joint electorate, the Muslims would naturally like to vote for Hindus who have genuinely identified themselves with the life of the majority community. Incidentally, all the Rajas and landlords and big businessmen, all the Mahajans and Maharajas and money-lenders, and majority of the Hindu professors, teachers, doctors and lawyers have crossed the border and settled in India. The vast majority of those who are left behind are agriculturists, labourers, fishermen, cobblers, potters and petty tradesmen. In other words, the present Hindu population in East Pakistan has merged itself with the common life of the country, as they are anxious to live in peace with their Muslim fellow citizens.

The Muslims in undivided India insisted on separate electorate in order to secure their interests; if the Hindu minority in Pakistan does not seek these constitutional safeguards, why force them to accept a thing

which they don't want. But, then, why do the Hindus ask for joint electorate? This question is often construed to mean that the Hindus welcome joint electorate because this system is bound to work against the best interests of Pakistan. The only way to answer this question is to probe the working of the Hindu mind on the subject:

(A) The Hindus feel that they are hardly entitled to demand separate electorate when they condemned this method of representation before Pakistan came into being.

(B) They think that separate electorate could not serve their interests as this method had so utterly failed to safeguard the rights of Indian Muslims that they realised one day that there was no alternative to Pakistan.

(C) They believe that it will be fatal to their future if they try to seek constitutional guarantees like separate electorate without being able to lay the foundations of lasting friendship with the majority community. In other words, they have begun to realise that no security is possible without the goodwill of the Muslims.

(D) As a corollary to the above, they fear that, under separate electorate, they will perhaps be forced to hold a "balance of power" between contesting Muslim groups and play off one faction against the other. They

realise that any temporary advantages that might accrue from this 'dominant position' would ultimately recoil on them.

If we do not give to minorities a chance to be integrated in the national life of the country, we shall be producing a class of most rabid, bigoted and communal-minded Hindus. We believe that separate electorates are sure to divide us and split us further; the system of joint electorate alone has the innate vitality to make Pakistan one united nation, one strong country.

► Here is a brief dissertation on separate electorates which can be considered supplementary to the above, as replies to most of the arguments adduced by the advocates of this system have been given in the case for joint electorates which you have just read.

The plea for separate electorates is a plea for preserving the ideological fabric of Pakistan. The demand for separation was based on separateness which existed and still exists between Muslims and Hindus. Separate electorate was the historical expression of this separateness and the creation of Pakistan is no justification for discarding this method. Separate electorate is indissolubly linked with the movement for Pakistan, the two-nation theory and the principle that sanctioned the partition of the subcontinent into two separate sovereign States. What was good before Pakistan cannot be bad after the birth of Pakistan. If we

repudiate the two-nation theory now, we were either liars and hypocrites when we fought for Pakistan or we are liars and hypocrites after we have established Pakistan. We always envisaged Pakistan as an Islamic State, because Muslims were a separate people and their interests could only be promoted and their identity could only be preserved if they were free to elect Muslims, which was only possible on the basis of separate electorates. Here are a few quotations from the speeches and statements of the Quaid-i-Azam, which should settle the electorate issue for all time to come.

"It is my belief that our salvation lies in following the golden rules of conduct set for us by our great law-giver, the Prophet of Islam. Let us lay the foundations of our democracy on the basis of truly Islamic ideals and principles."—(February 14, 1948).

"Now you have to stand guard over the development and maintenance of Islamic democracy, Islamic social justice, and equality in your own native soil."—(February 21, 1948).

"Islam has taught us this, and I think you will agree with me that whatever else you may be and whatever you are, you are Muslims. You belong to a nation now."—(March 21, 1948).

"You are only voicing my sentiments and the sentiments of millions of Musalmans when you say that

Pakistan should be based on sure foundations of Islamic socialism."—(March 26, 1948).

"Pakistan is the embodiment of the unity of the Muslim nation and so it must remain. That unity, we, as true Muslims, must jealously safeguard and preserve."—(March 28, 1948).

"We Musalmans believe in one God, one book—The Holy Quran—one Prophet. We must stand united as one nation."—(April 17, 1948).

Thus, joint electorates militate against the ideological concept of Pakistan and are sure to weaken the foundations of our State.

Again, what about the national minorities in Pakistan, particularly the Hindus? The question is not of reducing or augmenting Hindu strength in the Provincial Assemblies and the National Parliament, as some argue, but of guaranteeing them seats according to their population. "It would be immoral and undemocratic to seek to reduce legitimate Hindu strength by recourse to dubious electoral devices." Besides, the Constitution of Pakistan protects their personal laws and, as citizens of Pakistan, they have equal rights and obligations. "The concept and character of the Islamic State cannot be identified with those of its counterparts in the West. We should have no illusions about it. The Islamic State always respected the status which the individual acquires

by membership of a given religious community. As a result, there was maintained that remarkable form of plurality of constitution which permitted various religious groups to live a life of their own"

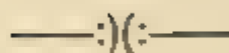
Furthermore, the form of electorate is a vital issue for Muslims of East Pakistan, as the Hindus in this part of the country are still in a uniquely powerful position and still dominate the commercial life of the province. Let us remember Quaid-i-Azam's historic warning when he visited East Pakistan: "I would ask you plainly when political agencies and organs of the Indian Press which fought tooth and nail to prevent the creation of Pakistan are suddenly found with a tender conscience for what they call the just claims of Muslims of East Bengal, do you not consider this a most sinister phenomenon? Is it not perfectly obvious that having failed to prevent the Muslims from achieving Pakistan, these agencies are now trying to disrupt Pakistan from within by insidious propaganda aimed at setting brother Muslim against brother Muslim?" As a corollary, let us try to imagine the picture if the system of joint electorates was allowed to operate in East Pakistan. It is believed that a "general election in East Pakistan under a system of joint electorates will let loose a combination of forces where Hindus, the Communists, 'nationalist Muslims', combined together, will have the whiphand. The above combine can capture 50 to 60 per cent seats in districts where the Hindus are

30 to 40 per cent of the population. At places, where the Hindus are 20 to 25 per cent they will vote for such Hindu candidates who can purchase Muslim votes. That might give them 30 to 40 seats. At places where Hindus are less than 25 per cent, the undivided Hindu votes will be cast in favour of Communist candidates.... Instead of reducing, joint electorates can artificially inflate Hindu strength in the legislature."

And, finally, we cannot blink for a moment the fact that, years after the birth of Pakistan, India and Indian leaders are not yet mentally converted to the idea and fact of partition. We must realize the real threat represented by India; we must beware of the dangers to which we are still exposed; and the only way we can meet the challenge is to forge unity between Muslims of East and West Pakistan. In a geographically divided country like Pakistan Islam is the only cementing factor, integrating force and uniting power.

The situation had become so serious on the eve of Revolution that, for a moment, it appeared that the issue was perhaps not general elections, not even the form of electorate but how to save Pakistan from the catastrophic consequences of a controversy which was mounting every day. It was not an imaginary fear but a foreseeable disaster; it was a deluge which could devour us all. When the leaders of a political party demanded referendum to elicit public opinion on the subject, the issue

'was dangerously depicted as a choice between Islam and kufr. Even before the suggestion could be considered, the situation became more explosive and aroused factional feelings and sectional passions. The Revolution did not come a moment too late.



CHAPTER V

ONE UNIT DRAMA

*"Pakistan . . . it is all yours,
it does not belong to a Punjabi
or a Sindhi or a Pathan . . ."*

Quaid- -Azam



ONE UNIT DRAMA

The plea for One Unit was a plea for sanity, but its birth and implementation is a story of shameful betrayal which is writ large on the face of politicians who were called upon to promote the integration plan. They openly declared themselves in favour of a disintegration plan; they did not try to work but wreck One Unit from within. It was perhaps not surprising, as One Unit edifice was built on the tomb of ministers who were removed from their Provincial gaddis; back to power, they engineered to sabotage the new integrated Province and declared that the experiment had failed. But One Unit was never given a fair chance; it was an operation for the better health and happiness of West Pakistan, but the care-takers removed the balm and bandages even before the patient was in a convalescent mood and had gained strength to fight its enemies. In fact, they had pronounced the patient dead and declared post mortem result, but for the Revolution which exposed and scotched the provincial bogey and came to represent the consummation of the nation's dream that, one day, both East and West Pakistan would be One Unit.

► For the people, One Unit was a correct, concrete and constitutional step towards the consolidation of Pakistan; for the politicians, it was a challenge to the r

- privileged provincial positions. These are two parts of the story which deserve to be related separately.

Here is the people's case for One Unit. Geographically, West Pakistan is one compact tract of land; historically, the boundaries that separated provincial units were artificially created and never had any intrinsic permanence; economically, every part of West Pakistan is interlinked and the poverty or prosperity of each part is dependent on the development of the area as a whole.

One Unit was not a new idea. It is common knowledge that during Lord Lytton's time there was a move to integrate the areas of Sind, the Punjab and the North-West Frontier. But the propelling power behind the decisions and policies of the foreign rulers was, inevitably, imperial good. It was not considerations of propriety, desirability or even practicability but colonial interests which determined their approach to administrative problems.

Another look at history will show that the provincial units were created for administrative convenience and imperial reasons. The basis was not racial, cultural or linguistic but political expediency. Geography, geology, history, natural resources and basic culture—all pointed to the indivisible nature of the area which today is called West Pakistan. The British re-demarcated the area and created a number of small water-tight adminis-

trative units, but the reasons which impelled them to do so are not and should not be our reasons. We should piece together what was torn asunder and weld the people of West Pakistan into a harmonious whole. Any attempt to prolong or perpetuate the British-created divisions would have been a challenge to nature, an insult to commonsense and betrayal of the ideals which gave birth to Pakistan.

Even during the British days, there was a strong protest against the separation of the North-West Frontier from the Punjab. In 1901, Mackworth Young, the then Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, said in a memorandum that more harm than good would be done by creating the new province. According to him, "the miniature administration which it is proposed to constitute will be much less efficient than that which now exists as part of a large provincial organization." After giving several cogent reasons against the scheme, Mackworth Young concluded, "In the interests of the administration I venture to represent, with whatever weight may attach to my service and experience, that no advantage will be gained by giving effect to the present scheme which is not out-weighed by its disadvantages, and I once again ask that I may not be called upon to give effect to it during the brief period that remains to me of my Lieutenant-Governorship."

Here is incontestable historical evidence to prove that West Pakistan has always been regarded as a single

administrative unit. Neither geography nor the population factor presented any difficulty in consolidating West Pakistan into a single homogeneous province. The military, political and imperial reasons which prompted the foreign rulers to maintain provincial boundaries are no longer tenable, particularly when it is clear that these boundaries were artificial creations and deserved to be eliminated in the national interest.

The West Pakistan province has always been culturally one: it is susceptible to the same processes of history, conditioned by the same physical circumstances and subject to the same cultural influences. The variety is there but it is a variety more of design than of fabric, as the common social intercourse and cultural affinities within West Pakistan transgress the lines of demarcation created by the old administrative units. For instance, the people of Hazara are closer to those of the Rawalpindi Division than of any district in the Frontier Province; Mianwali and Dera Ghazi Khan are more akin to their western than to their eastern neighbours; Bahawalpur and Multan are almost a single entity, Rahim Yar Khan might well be a part of Sind; northern Sind seems to belong to Baluchistan and half of Baluchistan looks very much like the land of Pathans.

Historically speaking, the areas which today constitute West Pakistan, have always maintained their distinctive entity as a country inhabited by a people bound together by cultural and racial ties. In popular

parlance, these areas constitute the Indus Valley civilization, as contra-distinguished from the Valley of the Ganges. From times immemorial, North-West India had always formed an integral whole, commonly called Hadood-i-Gharbia by the Muslim chroniclers. According to the reputed saint, Data Ganj Bakhsh, "Indus is a liquid channel along which live children of common ancestors." The Indus Valley is the home of one people and the Indus River is the main life-line of economic and social development in the North-Western regions of Pakistan.

On the intellectual plane we find that West Pakistan's regional languages show a remarkable unity of thought, ideology and atmosphere. Their words and vocabulary, their literary themes and ideas seem to spring from one common cultural pool. What is more, Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto and Baluchi are written in substantially the same script.

West Pakistan's common cultural heritage apart, even the Bengal literature of today shows an intellectual kinship with the literature of West Pakistan. As a Bengali writer has put it: "The trend of today's literature in East Bengal is towards having a link with the literature of the Muslim world in general and with that of West Pakistan in particular. Reformation of the language is in the making and the appreciation of poets and philosophers like Hafiz, Rumi and Iqbal is growing."

(The economic unity of West Pakistan is unquestionable; the various parts of this region are so closely interlinked and interdependent that no balanced planning can be undertaken and no development schemes can ever be fruitful unless the whole of this area is treated as one economic unit. The pattern of trade, the needs and demands of the people, the mode of employment are much the same and subject to the same market conditions. The system of communications, the flow of rivers, the nature of economy, the quality of agricultural products, the potentialities of industrial development—all possess a common basic character. Trade barriers and restrictions on the movement of goods inside West Pakistan not only lowered production levels in the past but also motivated against the interest of the consumers. One Unit is bound to result in the growth of stable markets and do away with price disparities, local inflations and artificial scarcities.

Again the system of quotas, permits and licences on provincial basis had created discontentment among West Pakistan's mercantile community. We know it to our cost how much heat was generated in the past over the use of the Indus waters for irrigational and hydel purposes, the distribution of electricity produced in the Frontier Province, the utilisation of Sui gas and the exploitation of Baluchistan coal mines. One Unit alone could cut out duplication, eliminate wastage and make the administration of development expenditures easier

and more economical, and release new social forces which have already brought the people closer and promoted a more patriotic understanding of our common problems. Furthermore, One Unit is bound to accelerate the pace of industrialisation, the pooling of the old Provincial and States budgets will enable the new Government to undertake planning for the whole of West Pakistan.

The economic benefits which will inevitably follow the merger are so obvious that there can be no doubt that One Unit is potentially capable of opening up an era of prosperity undreamt of in the past. West Pakistan is an indivisible economic unit, what is more, its natural resources are not concentrated in any particular locality but are dispersed all over the area. The only way to harness these resources and utilise them for economic development is to pool them under one administration. Secondly, the old provincial governments were hardly in a position, financially, to develop the power and fuel resources and the mineral wealth of West Pakistan, or to undertake large irrigation and land settlement projects. Thirdly, the One Unit administration can not only accelerate the pace of development but remove the inter-provincial barriers and trade restrictions. For instance, in the past, timber could not be exported to the Punjab because the Frontier Government was constrained to impose certain restrictions on its export. The Punjab suffered but the Frontier Province perhaps

- suffered more during the food scarcity days when the stalwart Pathan received barely half the ration needed for his sustenance. These anomalies should be unimaginable under the new administration.

Finally, what about the under-developed areas of Pakistan? It is hardly a debatable proposition that some areas of West Pakistan are more advanced than others. The level of education, the state of public health, the standard of living and the degree of political consciousness vary as we move from one part of the area to another. Other factors apart, constitutional reforms were introduced in various provinces at different times. For instance, the Punjab Legislative Council was established in 1897. In 1919, the Punjab was raised to a Governor's Province and the Legislative Assembly came into being in 1935. The Frontier Province was a part of the Punjab till 1901 and was raised to the status of a Governor's Province in 1932. Sind was a part of the Bombay Presidency and became a separate province as late as 1935. Baluchistan was a Chief Commissioner's Province at the time of the passage of the Government of India Act, 1935. One Unit alone can lift the backward and under-developed areas of West Pakistan to the level of the more advanced areas. The establishment of One Unit was the greatest boon for the toiling millions of Pakistan; the Haris of Sind, the struggling peasants of the Punjab and the precariously-placed sugarcane growers of the Frontier are today not only able to meet

and greet each other with pride but have become common participants in the common economic effort to make Pakistan a country of the common man. What happens in Taxila is echoed in Tando Adam; every happy incident is bound to produce a chain of reactions, from Landikotal to Larkana, from the Chitral mountains to the Makran coast.

Thus, One Unit was the only effective reply to the challenge of power-hungry provincial leaders. In the absence of One Unit, West Pakistan would have continued to be like a woman who has a number of paramours but no husband. Everybody wanted to dominate her, and even make love to her, but nobody perhaps really wanted to marry her. She was in search of a sincere and strong husband who could unify her personality and impart stability to her life. One Unit alone could confer on her the status of a self-respecting family woman.

Thus, if the judge is honest, One Unit case needs no defence counsel. It is like a house where each mansion has its own peculiar colour and individual character but the walls which separate the rooms are the walls which sustain the whole structure. It is like a tree with a rich foliage and strong serpentine branches but they derive their sustenance from the common roots of the trunk firmly implanted in the ground. It is like a mother who has equal love for her born and unborn children,

her weak and strong children, her small and big children. This is the spirit of One Unit.

Thus, the people merged their hearts to work the merger plan, as they realized that West Pakistan does not belong to Punjabis, Pathans, Baluchis or Sindhis, but to all Pakistanis; they learnt to forget that we belong to a smaller province or a bigger province. We all belong to Pakistan and to each other.

For the smaller provinces, I have the following story: "Our local doctor discovered one Christmas that some of his patients hadn't paid their accounts for as long as 14 months. In the holiday spirit, he wrote to each, cancelling the account and expressing his regret that they had had such a poor year. All but one paid, virtually by return post."

You are small, but what does it matter? If your weak position demands that more care be bestowed on you, your pride demands that you 'pay your bills' like all others.

For the bigger provinces, I have the following story: "At a local theatre many of the ladies were wearing hats, which interfered with the view of those sitting behind them. At the end of the first act the manager made a plea for removal of the headgear. There was a moment's hesitation until he added, 'This does not apply to elderly ladies.' All the hats came off immediately."

Older women in the theatre (like all women) thought it was an insult to call them 'elderly ladies'... let our 'elderly provinces' fall in line with our 'younger provinces'....let nobody obstruct anybody's view... let everybody see the show.

For both the smaller and bigger provinces I have the story of a man whom we must NOT follow:

On a famous American radio programme the chairman used to hold up a ball for the studio audience to see, "What colour?" he would ask. "White", they would answer. Then he turned the ball round and asked again. "Black", they said. Every question, he continued has two sides, and we ought to hear both

If, in the One Unit administration, the aggrieved party can see only black and the adjudging party can see only white, no dispute can be amicably settled. I say so because many complex questions we might be called upon to solve would have more than two sides. Let us have the yes to see the area where the black and white meet. Let us have the vision to see all shades of colour. Let the pattern of One Unit be grey.

► But the politicians were allergic to grey which represented the colour of compromise. They depicted One Unit in the darkest hues. You have read the people's verdict on One Unit; here is the politician's version which turned out to be subversion of the integration ideal.

Soon after One Unit became a constitutional reality, a proposal was mooted in some quarters to divide West Pakistan "for certain purposes" into three or four large regions. These regions turned out to be former Punjab, former Sind, former Frontier province and former Baluchistan. When it was agreed that there will be eleven divisions in the new province of West Pakistan, there was no point in retaining the old administrative units. The suggestion was against the very conception and spirit of One Unit. It was a veiled and vicious attempt to preserve separatism; it was an inspired move to keep alive the moloch of provincialism in the glamorous garb of regionalism. I say so because any attempt to create new divisions, apart from the Commissioners' Divisions, was a negation of the One Unit idea. No wonder, as they conspired a frontal attack on One Unit, the whole thing degenerated into a Punjab bogey.

It was announced that Punjab had agreed to 40 per cent representation in the proposed One Unit Legislature but, after ten years, representation would be granted on a population basis, the Punjab being entitled to 50 per cent. Thus, the people were constantly reminded of provincial quotas and forget about provincial boundaries. They referred to percentages in terms which almost tempted the people to believe that One Unit would not be able to abolish the old provincial units. Was representation in the West Pakistan Legislature going to be on population or provincial basis? The

answer was that it would be granted on provincial population basis; but the moment we abolished the artificial provincial frontiers, we were bound to abolish the basis for statutorily determining representation according to the population of various provincial units. The required representation of the old provinces was automatically assured, unless there was a large scale inter-provincial movement of population. Thus, attempts were made to persuade Punjab to reduce still further her share in the Unit Legislature and make a bigger sacrifice to cheer up the minor provinces. As this battle of provincial percentages raged, the fear and threat of Punjabi dominion mounted, they began to call One Unit a clever move to increase the orbit of Punjab and embrace within its boundaries the whole of West Pakistan. They depicted Punjab as the villain of the piece, the proverbial shark which is sure to swallow the smaller fries. One Unit became a trap to net the weaker provinces, a conspiracy against backward areas. It was not a plea for backward areas as there were backward areas in all the old provincial units. But, it paid them to clamour for protective measures and guarantees, and demand special positions and safeguards for small provinces.

Thus, it was no longer a whispering campaign; it became an open agitation against One Unit. The anti-merger propaganda was in full swing. With seeds of disintegration strewn all over West Pakistan, there

begin a triangular orgy of political dancing and debauchery, with the people looking aghast at the men who claimed to represent them. The Republicans were manoeuvring to retain and the Muslim League to gain power in West Pakistan; and the National Awami Party tried to blackmail both.

The Muslim League was accused of entering into a "secret agreement" with the National Awami Party in the Provincial Assembly and having "twice agreed" to undo One Unit. The leader of the Muslim League Assembly Party categorically denied it and yet, after three days, the Muslim League Working Committee met at Karachi and approved the following resolution to be moved at the Council meeting next day: "This Council of the Pakistan Muslim League is of the considered view that the people of the smaller provinces are opposed to the continuance of One Unit and, in view of their avowed opposition to it, it will be in the interests of good administration if suitable steps are taken to undo the wrong in conformity with the express will of the people concerned." The Council met and deferred the consideration of this resolution. The Muslim League, it was said, had even offered "to support a resolution in the Provincial Assembly directed at the disintegration of One Unit" if the National Awami Party decided to support a Muslim League Ministry. The Muslim League Council meeting at Dacca voted for the West Pakistan merger but was "at public opinion which compelled it to resign from its

undertakings to the National Awami Party and support, One Unit'? There was no grace left in this belated action; it was more a face-saving ointment and vote-catching device than a faith-promoting declaration in favour of One Unit.

In September 1957, there were disquieting rumours that the ruling Republican Party and the National Awami Party had decided to join hands on the specific understanding that One Unit would be split and the province would be reconstituted as a sub-federation with several autonomous provinces. A spokesman of the National Awami Party openly claimed that the Republicans would support the anti-One Unit resolution, if tabled in the Assembly by his Party. The Republican chief stated that 'he had not been a party' to the agreement, and yet on September 17, 1957, the West Pakistan Assembly passed the anti-merger resolution. A Muslim League leader hastened to call it "a black day in the history of Pakistan. . . . Future historians would consider it as the day on which the foundation of 'Pushtunistan' was laid by an Assembly in which 290 members out of 300 were opposed to it, yet voted for it or remained silent for dubious and transitory gain. The logical outcome of undoing the Unit would be to accentuate provincialism in the new provinces which are going to be created on the basis of linguistic racialism." And, yet, those who voted against One Unit were the men who, as members of the Punjab, N.W.F.P. and Sind Legislative Assemblies, had unanimously passed resolutions

In the three Houses, "urging the wedding of West Pakistan into one administrative unit, as the only just, honourable and workable solution. " Could there be a more sad and striking example of brazen-faced effrontery and shameless opportunism? It was a surprise to many that Suhrawardy, a leader from East Pakistan, should declare that, for him, One Unit was "an article of faith" and he would never support the Republicans on this issue as dismemberment of West Pakistan was against his "principles which were guided by the stability, solidarity and strength of Pakistan."

True to form, the National Awami Party was out to make confusion worse confounded. They always believed in chaos, for they believed that anything could come out of chaos. Thus, they nearly succeeded in confusing the issues when they began to canvass opinion in favour of 'zonal federation'. But the plan soon turned out to be an undefined zoological product; it was more an abortion of an idea than a full-fledged offspring. It was nebulous, mongrel and vague; it was neither fish, flesh nor good red herring, and the only way to recommend it was to prove that it was the best method to promote integration and cohesion in West Pakistan. But it was a trick and a trap; and it was bound to foment more provincial bitterness and bickering. Could we ever imagine for a moment a central federation, a zonal federation and provincial units? The plan was rightly

rejected but the National Awami Party leaders thought that they had won a negative victory by securing Republican support for breaking up One Unit.

Thus, opposition to One Unit was organised not by party leaders but by Cabinet members who were morally and legally bound to support and strengthen the Unit administration after being sworn in as ministers. A member of the West Pakistan Assembly challenged in the House that "certain Ministers who were the custodians of the Province have been openly criticizing One Unit." If they had an iota of democratic decency, they should have resigned when they could not conceal their hostility to the integration objectives of a Government which they were commissioned to serve. But they did not relinquish their posts, as they could not deprive themselves of power which they were determined to use for weakening the Unit administration.

In February 1958, a West Pakistan Minister said in a public statement that "there was no doubt that within the unified administrative set-up itself and among those who came into contact with it, provincial jealousies were on the increase. The experiment had been a failure as the Punjabis, Pathans, Sindhis and Baluchis had not been able to fit themselves into a homogeneous social pattern.. The people from the smaller provinces were at a definite disadvantage."

In April 1958, another Minister said at a press conference, "the feeling in the former province of Sind is growing rapidly against One Unit administration. The experience of the last two years has not been a happy one. There has been centralisation of power at Lahore, rise in crimes, delay in the disposal of revenue and other matters, utter discrimination in recruitment of persons in services from backward areas like Sind, Baluchistan, Frontier, etc. The promises made were not fulfilled and the schemes of the Administration Council which preceded the unification of West Pakistan have not been given effect to."

Again, in April 1958, a Deputy Minister told newsmen that "One Unit was proving a tremendously costly affair in terms of money and unless some drastic changes were introduced in the administrative set up, ultimate result might be total ruination of the province." During the same month, another West Pakistan Deputy Minister said, "the people of the former Frontier province and the tribal areas had been greatly disappointed at the experiment of One Unit. One Unit had blocked all avenues to progress and we have been rendered subservient to the political bosses."

Moved by this official anti-merger campaign, a public-spirited leader who had been a great advocate of One Unit said in a statement that "by levying a tax of Rs. 6 per acre on the sugarcane crop, the Legislature had purposely provided the people of the former Frontier

province with an excuse of opposing the establishment of One Unit and say that they were better off in the pre-Integration period."

Having thus crippled the growing Unit administration, some Republican bigwigs, aided by their accomplices, declared that One Unit experiment had failed. They became the judge, with one Unit in the dock and the minor provinces as the plaintiff who had been deprived of "a local and indigenous regime" and had suffered at the hands of a "remote and alien Government." But, was the accused given a fighting chance to defend its conduct? There was no occasion for it, as its own defence counsel held it guilty on counts which are worth examining. I can best illuminate this point by referring to the declared decisions of the Council for Administration of West Pakistan. The system of administration, proposed for West Pakistan, had been based on six principles:

(1) Those responsible for administration are not to 'govern' the people; they are instead to serve them.

But they neither governed nor served but left things drift.. It became a Government by whim and not by rule of law; it became an administrative mess; the people did not know who was the competent authority to deal with their problems and redress their grievances.

(2) An effective machinery to be evolved for the co-ordination of all development activities undertaken by the various Departments of Government.

But, thanks to the struggle for power and supremacy, they had neither the time nor talent for development. It was decided to constitute District Development Committees with the Deputy Commissioner as Chairman, heads of all Departmental offices to be members, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of District Boards, President of Municipal Committee, one representative from Panchayats and one from the Village Aid Organisation. Similar Committees were suggested on the Divisional level, to review the administration and strive to settle inter-district problems. The unification of West Pakistan afforded a unique opportunity for improvement in the methods and techniques of administration, as it was recognised that Pakistan had inherited a system which was interested mainly in the preservation of law and order and only incidentally in the welfare of the people. Thus, the big question was: How far the old system of administration could be improved? The politicians did not even ponder for a moment and realise their responsibility to the new Government.

(3) A clear distinction is to be made between the functions of the Secretariat and those of the attached Departments; it would be the responsibility of the Secretariat to formulate policy, while it would be the responsibility of the attached Departments to implement the policy.

In fact, even the ministerial responsibility was not

defined. For instance, the new headworks and canals were not included in the portfolio of the Minister of Irrigation. The Secretaries could be expected to lay down rules of administrative procedure, define the functions and fix the responsibility of all Secretariat officers and Departmental heads but they had to attend both to the routine, normal work and solve the integration problems.

(4) There is to be maximum delegation and redelegation of powers and functions so that descending spheres of responsibility are established throughout the Province and most problems are settled without reference to Provincial headquarters.

But, the Ministers were scared of decentralisation and, what is more, whenever they agreed to delegation of powers, they failed to enforce a uniform system of such powers at the Divisional and District level. What will happen if the Commissioners misused their powers? But the fear was unfounded as the Commissioners were never given a chance. A Deputy Secretary in the Secretariat exercised more powers than the Commissioner of a Division! The result was delay, lack of decisions and inconvenience to the public. One of the "top priority jobs" for the Commissioners was to send repeated reminders to the headquarters to send back the urgent papers lying there for months and months; the files seemed to have lost all power of locomotion.

(5) There should be no need for the public to travel to the Provincial headquarters; the District officers should possess adequate powers to deal with local complaints locally and to correct abuses on the spot without delay.

But the public had to travel to Provincial headquarters even for securing a gun licence, a route permit, declaration for a newspaper, not to speak of matters connected with revenue, colonisation, forests, local bodies, improvement trusts, courts of wards, etc. The heads of attached Departments and District representatives had no powers to secure speedy and effective disposal of work without constant reference to the headquarters. It had been decided that most of the local problems should be settled at the District level and the remaining at the Divisional level and only five per cent cases should be referred to the headquarters. But the arrangement did not suit the ministers, for nothing mattered to them more than to maintain their personal and party position. There are instances of their interference at the patwarī and sub-inspector's level; they even tried to regulate the release of water from the canals in a mofussil town where they had perhaps an ally to please or an adversary to win over.

(6) The integration of the existing Provincial and State Services and their reorganisation to be done in a manner as to ensure that (a) the present seniority of

existing officers is not disturbed; (b) transfers outside the areas for which the existing officers were recruited are generally avoided; (c) existing terms, conditions, scales of pay, leave and pension, are safeguarded, and the rights of promotion are protected.

It was perhaps too difficult a problem for the ministers to tackle; but the tragedy is that they did not even care to study the West Pakistan Administration Council's directives on the subject. The only way they could admit their failure was to declare that members of the Civil Services belonging to the smaller provinces were deadly opposed to the Unification of West Pakistan. Thus, a West Pakistan Minister from the former Frontier Province stated that "ninety per cent of the officials of his region were against the integration of the province."

This is, briefly, the story of sabotage, they reversed all decisions and repudiated all proposals of the Administration Council they hollowed every pillar of the One Unit structure and removed the vital parts without which the new administrative mechanism could not function for a day. I recall today a significant passage in an article I wrote on the morrow of One Unit's birth. It read: "The new province can only live on the strength of factors which have been advanced in favour of the merger plan. West Pakistan as a single Unit can only prosper on the strength of hope which has been held out to the people. The spirit of One Unit can only survive

if the promise of One Unit is fulfilled. One Unit will defeat its own ends if it fails to promote the good which is inherent in the plan. Worked well, One Unit can prove a boon but it can also prove a boomerang if its sponsors-in-power fail to be inspired by the ideals which have created the new province."

They justified the worst fears implicit in this warning. But it was not fear of the unknown, as they knew that One Unit was a challenge to their provincial kingdoms in which they would no longer operate as petty potentates. It would have denuded the local landlord politicians of the opportunity "to engage in intrigue, chicanery and outright coercion." And, their opposition to One Unit was born of their lust for land; the waderas thought that Sind was their exclusive preserve and even the barrages land should not be given to outsiders.

With the Muslim League sitting on the fence and the National Awami Party ready to pounce upon every opportunity to shatter One Unit, the situation became infinitely more serious when the ruling Republicans decided to keep the issue open and let its members preach the gospel of disunity according to their lights! With all these forces of disruption arrayed against One Unit, there were fifty-fifty chances of the merger surviving the pre-election campaigning period. And, if they had succeeded, West Pakistan would have been split in nine units (Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier Province,

Baluchistan States Union, Bahawalpur, Khairpur, Karachi and the States of North-West Frontier) creating new demarcation difficulties and leading to endless boundary disputes. Both the Punjab and Frontier Province would probably have claimed the Hazara District. It was in this climate of disintegration that the Revolution was born and the country was saved from atomization.

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THOUGHT FOR FOOD

*'Agriculture is our mainstay.
In essential foods we are com-
paratively fortunate*

Quaid-e-Azam



THOUGHT FOR FOOD

Ten years after the Revolution, the President of the Russian Planning Commission said on the eve of their first Five-Year Plan, 'the grain question is the most basic question of agriculture: only when we have solved it can we proceed to the solution of other questions, our special regions can only develop when they are assured of a firm grain basis .'. The 'grow more food' campaign in 1927 and 'produce more rockets' resolve in 1959 may not appear to be even remotely connected events, but we all know it to be profoundly true that the world's starving millions are so immersed in subsistence thoughts that they have no time to pursue things of the spirit and mind. Self-sufficiency in food is not only a target for the satiation of physical needs or for promoting national pride, but an objective which is inseparable from the moral and intellectual progress of a country. If you were to tell a famished labourer, with a wife and half a dozen children to feed, a philosophical way to happiness, you can be sure of a curt and quick reply.

Thus, it is not surprising that, since partition, each successive Government has realised that they would perhaps lose all battles if they could not steadfastly fight on the food front. They have never failed to recognise the paramount place of agriculture in our economy;

- it provides food for our people, raw materials for our industries, and earnings for our foreign exchange bank. If land is our mainstay, they should have striven hard to increase our agricultural production. What have they done ?

In the wake of Royal Commission on Agriculture appointed in 1928, our previous Governments have held a series of food and agriculture conferences, besides the Six-Year Plan, the Agricultural Enquiry Committee Report, the Grow More Food Conference, the Economic Appraisal Committee, and the First Five-Year Plan.

The Six-Year Development Plan of 1951 provided for an increase in cereal production from 13.71 million tons in 1949 to 15.41 million tons in 1957. The Grow More Food Conference held in 1952 set a target of 15.30 million tons in 1956-57. The Economic Appraisal Committee which reported in 1953 accepted the targets set by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1952. The Agricultural Conference held in 1956 pleaded for higher yields per acre and suggested the use of more manures and fertilizers, plant protection measures, additional seed multiplication, improved cultural practices and better storage facilities. In order to delve deep into the subject and pave the ground for implementation, these summit food talks were invariably followed by Sub-Committees, Steering Committees, Standing Committees, etc., etc. The academic level of these agricultural get-togethers

and the quality of discussion held at these conferences could not be doubted for a moment. But there was something else which could easily be doubted—the net result. They converted a food surplus country into a food deficit country. Thus, we faced an enemy which, as Mr. John O. Bell, former ICA Director in Pakistan, put it, “is equally as dangerous as any that might threaten from abroad. This enemy cannot be defeated by military forces. It infiltrates every farmstead, every field, and every area. It is silent and almost unseen, but each day it makes progress and its march is accelerated with each ensuing year. If the advance of this enemy is to be halted and its forces driven back on every front, it must first be recognized and identified. Every citizen must be alerted to its presence, in the countryside and in the cities. The people and the government must be mobilized to strike wherever and whenever this enemy makes an appearance. This is a problem for everyone, for this concerns the very livelihood and future welfare of the country. It represents a crisis in the development of Pakistan as a nation. It deserves to be treated as a problem of the highest priority. It calls for a mobilization of manpower and resources on the same basis as of military necessity.”

But the enemy continued to move and conquer and walked into our fields and factories. In 1947-48 we had 74,000 tons of exportable surplus and yet during the three years before Revolution we had to spend more than Rs. 170

crores of our hard-earned foreign exchange on the import of foodgrains. Between January 1956, and 30 June 1957, Pakistan had to import 15-lakh tons of wheat and rice at a stupendous cost of about 80 crores of rupees. Why? How is it that in spite of more and more irrigation canals more and more land being brought under the plough, more fertilisers and pesticides, more spraying equipment and improved methods of cultivation, we were becoming more and more deficit in food and begged our friends to give us more and more?

Was it due to corruption and inefficient administration? Was it due to smuggling? Was it due to our preference for cash crops? Was it due to price controls which left little incentive to the cultivator? Was it due to our failure to effect land reforms and protect the interests of the tiller? Or was it due to seepage and water-logging which threatened to convert Pakistan's fertile fields into waste lands?

However we try to explain it, the melancholy fact is that what was reputed to be the granary of the sub-continent became a food deficit area. If this was the plight, with foreign aid, could you imagine the plight without foreign aid.

They say that (a) natural calamities and (b) the multiplying population worsened the situation. But, this explanation cannot stand a moment's scrutiny. Floods and localised famines have always been a normal fea-

ture of our agricultural economy and we have always made an allowance for these factors in our assessment of the overall food position. The population argument is equally baseless because even if there has been an appreciable increase in numbers during the last several years, the food production, according to official estimates, has gone up by at least ten per cent since 1952.

It was officially estimated in 1956 that the annual food deficit was not more than 15,000 tons and "self-sufficiency in food can be attained within a year by vigorous effort. The deficiency is not so great. It is well within the resources of the Central and Provincial Governments to convert this shortage into surplus." But the fact is that, two years after this declaration, we had to spend several crores out of our own resources and secure 20 crores of foreign aid for the import of wheat alone. WHY?

Smuggling has been the biggest drain on our national economy and yet few have cared to assess the cost of this conspiracy against Pakistan. East Pakistan's expansive waterways have provided a unique operating springboard for smugglers, an ideal outlet for their illegal ways and illicit trade. Six months of 'Operation Close Door' in East Pakistan proved that Pakistan was basically not deficit in food or, at least, it was never deficient to the extent to which we had to import foodgrains. How

- ‘ is it that the yearly deficit had no arithmetical relevance to the total yield for the year ? No sooner the ‘Operation Close Door’ began than there was a sudden decline in the prices of articles and eatables. As rice prices fell by five to eight rupees per maund, India’s Nehru announced that his Government was contemplating to import 700,000 tons of rice. In fact, prices of all essential commodities showed a marked drop. In less than ten days, the Army seized goods worth Rs. 511,500 besides fish, eggs and poultry. It was found that, overnight, some owners of the rice mills had absconded. They disappeared because “these mills were used as centres of smuggling of rice and paddy. When a cultivator brought to the mill, from a distant place, his paddy for husking, he was almost invariably told that since the mills was overworked, only a portion of his paddy could be taken for husking and the rest could be sold to the mill for its use. The cultivator, generally in financial difficulty, and finding himself in a helpless position, could not say No’ to the proposal. Thus, in nine out of ten cases, the cultivator had to sell his stocks not at his price but at the price offered by the mill.” Is it not significant that the production of foodgrains in East Pakistan had increased during 1956-57 by two million tons but, in spite of this boost, it was found necessary to import $5\frac{1}{2}$ million tons of foodstuffs at a cost of Rs. 25 crores

What about West Pakistan? The ‘Operation Close

'Door' in East Pakistan was hardly three weeks old when it was reported that "large scale smuggling of food-grains through Jaisalmer is being carried on by a gang of smugglers operating between India and Pakistan. This smuggling has been stepped up in recent months owing to the prevailing food shortage in parts of Indian territory adjacent to Jaisalmer. Some influential Zamindars on both sides of the border are alleged to be giving protection and encouragement to the smugglers. The smugglers take foodgrains, especially wheat, and fetch Indian currency, biri leaves and cloth in return. They are stated to have created caches in the sand dunes and deserted spots in the border region, and they usually operate at night."

The people of Pakistan demanded more rigorous and more vigorous measures to stop smuggling and award capital punishment to smugglers, but the Government proposed to withdraw the anti-smuggling Bill, euphemistically called an amendment to the Sea Customs Act.

But, more tragic fate awaited us. With the advent of One Unit, there was such a clamour for Provincial autonomy that, for a moment, it appeared that East and West Pakistan Governments would reduce the Centre to a position of impotence. The Pakistan Government could hardly give up their claim to have the last autho-

‘ritative say on matters which affected the country as a whole, but the two wings seemed determined to nip the Centre's wings and make it subservient to their demands and directives. Could we ever hope to increase the country's food production when at an All Pakistan Agricultural Conference, a West Pakistan Minister gets up and questions the "competence" of the Centre to convene this meeting, because Agriculture was a Provincial subject! Here is a report (as it appeared in an English language daily of Pakistan) of the inaugural session of the Agricultural Conference held in August 1956.

"The West Pakistan Government are making a desperate bid to sabotage the high-level Agricultural Conference convened by the Prime Minister to discuss measures for increasing food production. The Minister, who acted as the belligerent spokesman of the Provincial Government, when the Conference opened, went to the extent of challenging the competence of the Conference. . . He sprang this surprise and held up the deliberations of the Conference by abstaining from it until after the Prime Minister had inaugurated it and left. He walked into the Conference when the inaugural session was about to conclude, formally objected to its agenda, contended that since Agriculture was a Provincial subject, the Conference could not discuss it and warned that the West Pakistan delegation would not participate

in the discussion on changes in the present land system. With a view to barring the Conference, the West Pakistan Government have sent only a token delegation of a couple of officials as compared to East Pakistan which has sent a full-fledged delegation. When the Minister challenged the competence of the Conference to discuss agricultural problems, a Central spokesman pointed out that whenever the Province was in difficulty, the Centre had to come to its rescue; whenever there was a food deficit, the Centre had to arrange for imports, appeal for foreign aid or spend foreign exchange on imports, but the Provincial Minister stuck to his guns tenaciously and refused to be convinced by arguments and asserted that West Pakistan would not participate in any discussion relating to changes in the present Zamindar-ridden land system. In the face of such adamant attitude, the Conference had no option but to appoint a Steering Committee.."

This provincial spirit had a still more uglier facet: there was literally a race between East and West Pakistan to spend more and more of foreign exchange on food. The following table needs neither an introduction nor a commentary. East Pakistan's "statistical deficit" of food-grains indicates their demand and "stocks received" show their requirements.

Year	Statistical deficit (in tons)	Stocks received by East Pakistan (in tons)	
		Rice	Wheat
1948-49	320,000	105,333	22,000
1949-50	300,000	129,806	130,000
1950-51	100,000	63,509	23,000
1951-52	215,000	218,691	29,000
1952-53	260,000	130,000	52,000
1953-54	318,000	7,864	57,500
1954-55	500,000	Nil	39,500
1955-56	700,000	534,000	48,000
1956-57	460,000	432,000	49,460
1957-58	500,000	421,900	70,530

Thus, our foreign exchange expenditure on food became a bottleneck, we had not even enough to purchase tractors, agricultural machinery and fertilizers. The position could not have, perhaps, so dangerously deteriorated if the Khans of Frontier, Zamindars of Punjab and Waderas of Sind had fully utilised their lands for maximum production. If all the culturable land had been brought under the plough, we might have at least partially succeeded in averting periodical threats of famine. Call it an irony of fate or the lighter side of life—the feudal landlords could not make the best use of their lands and yet they could not lift their eyes off

the lands released for cultivation by the barrages. Their appetite for land knew no limits; the Sindh landlords would not even let refugee peasants settle on areas opened up for cultivation by the huge irrigation projects. The Ghulam Mohammad Barrage made water available in 1957 but the colonisation work was criminally delayed. Secondly, if proper steps had been taken in time, the damaged lands could be geared into production by the installation of tube wells, proper drainage, and anti-erosion measures. It is true that 80 lakhs acres of irrigated land in the former Punjab are now affected by salinity; over 10 lakhs acres have gone out of cultivation; 20 lakhs acres give 50 per cent of normal productivity, and 50 lakhs produce 20 per cent less than normal. But, experts believe that if yields on this land were a sixth or seventh of the potential, the recurring food deficit could be avoided.

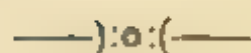
On the other extreme was the toiling tiller who could not make optimum use of the soil and the water resources because he was deprived of a personal pride in the land he ploughed and denuded of all incentives to work hard and maximize the yield from the few acres at his disposal. He seemed to be content with his precarious existence and just laboured for his subsistence. Even his paltry holding was not his possession; he could not take a risk when there was no reward. He could not convert "sand into gold", as Adam Smith would say, because he sowed the seed and the landlord reaped the

harvest. Thus it was realised that "the major problem was giving the cultivator a real stake in the land, for he alone can deliver the food supplies we need, but he has not received a fair measure of economic and social justice." But the landlord-led West Pakistan Assembly never believed that the agrarian reforms were overdue and frivolously debated the issue without taking any concrete and concerted steps to settle the rental position, fix the length and security of tenure and determine purchase rights.

Thus, even if we make a generous allowance for changing climate, gambling rainfall and increasing floods, we were surely not incapable of achieving self-sufficiency beyond the vagaries of nature. But, long-term production plans apart, our ex-rulers bungled and fumbled in administering even short-term programmes of building up reserves. Thus, many came to believe that "it is the reckless and ill-advised procurement drive that has been responsible for foodgrains either being smuggled across the border or finding their way into the black-market." The procurement machinery was so clumsily worked that it defeated its own objects. Thus, out of 37,00,000 tons of wheat in the 1958 Rabi crop, the Government were not able to procure more than 2,52,000 tons.

Thus, the Revolution came to meet the challenge

at a time when we had all begun to wonder whether Pakistan's 94 millions could maintain a 15-ounce food ration per capita or had we to go below the barest minimum. The fact that the net cash expenditure on food was not more than Rs. 2 crores during 1959 showed that the problem was not insoluble. And, yet, this problem administered such a shattering blow to our economy that many of us became sceptical of our survival as a viable State.





ECONOMIC LAPSES

"Nature has given you everything; it is now for you to build and build as quickly as you can."

— Quaid-i-Azam



ECONOMIC LAPSES

Thus, we have seen that the colossal expenditure on food had a blighting impact on our economy; our industrial production was curtailed, development plans were held in abeyance, our foreign exchange earnings dwindled from Rs. 96 crores in 1956 to Rs. 41 crores in 1958 and we had to countenance repeated deficits in our balance of payments. If our ex rulers had accorded to agriculture the priority it deserved, we would have firmly laid the foundations of economic stability and development. I say so because, in a predominantly agricultural country like Pakistan, food prices determine the cost of living and wages and act as the spinal cord of the economic structure.

Even a causal examination of factors which conspired to create the economic quagmire where we found ourselves stuck, on the eve of Revolution, would prove the utter failure of previous Governments to reverse the dangerous trends which contributed every day to the deteriorating situation. The State Bank Report on Currency and Finance for the year 1957-58 highlighted the economic predicament of the nation and revealed a crisis in our affairs which politicians had always tried to conceal. There was a 4.2 per cent fall in our food production;

- a progressive decline in our industrial output; a significant drop in our foreign exchange earnings and maintenance of fantastic imports on Government account. No wonder the level of deficit financing touched the astounding figure of Rs. 71.51 crores.

How and why did it happen? If we probe into the recent past we find that, before 1950, Pakistan was not only self-sufficient in food but had an exportable surplus of wheat and rice, even though the investment in the agricultural segment was negligibly small compared to the investment in the industrial sector. The pace of industrialisation was accelerated in 1950 when the average investment in the development programme was estimated to be about 40 per cent of our national income. This year saw the Korean War boom, like most of the raw material producing countries, Pakistan reaped a rich harvest. The Big Powers' stockpiling race gave us Rs. 200 crores of foreign exchange. In 1951, our export earnings shot up to Rs. 252 crores, which were roughly 60 per cent more than our earnings in previous years. But there was a fall of about Rs. 80 crores in 1952 when there were discernible signs that the Korean War would not lead to a global conflict. The boom was inevitably followed by slump; the sellers' market in 1950-51 was turned into a buyers' market in 1952-53; and our total export earnings in 1953 could not go beyond Rs. 145

crores. The crisis had come, but before we had time to tailor our requirements according to our resources and assess the economic reality, the windfall of Rs. 200 crores had been squandered away. Our foreign exchange earnings had depleted to such an extent that the Government had to scrap the open general licence system. But the abolition of OGL did not herald the end of our troubles; it proved to be the beginning of a huge racket which sapped the country's economic strength. The need to cut down the import of luxury goods and other inessential items was never more direly indicated than in 1953-54, the choice then would have made all the difference between economic stability and the depression which gripped us in succeeding years. The following excerpt from an article I wrote eight years ago conveys the trend of popular opinion on the policies pursued by the Government of the day, in spite of their public admission that drastic measures were needed to prepare the basis for our economic recovery; it was a passionate plea for total ban on the import of big cars, fine cloth, white sugar, toilet requisites, hardware and crockery.

"Every Cadillac, Buck, Dodge, Chrysler, Pontiac we import deprives us of a Tractor, a Lathe, a Lino, a Pressing Machine, a Power Loom.. If we have any economic horse sense, we must not import any car beyond 18 horse power.."

“Every ounce of imported sugar is like a dead-weight and every yard of imported cloth is like a noose round the neck of Pakistan. Is it not a fact that, under the American aid, we imported recently super fine varieties of cloth from several European countries. Borrowing and begging is bad, but what do you think of a man who borrows and begs only to get drunk, lose money at the races, and flirt with expensive girls..”

“If our women folk are sure that lipstick does not make them less attractive, let them make up the deficiency of their natural Pakistani looks by using Pakistani beauty aids.. ”

“And, finally, let the diabetic rich remember that it is the state of the stomach and not the shape of the silver pots that produces the gastric juice and stimulates appetite..”

“Let us remember that every imported luxury item means that a poor peasant has been denuded of something, a refugee has been deprived of a house, a child has not been educated and a patient has died without treatment. ”

At that time, there were more than 300 items on the regular import list; some of them need never have come to Pakistan but they continued to invade our country and currency, despite warnings from economic experts

and public-spirited individuals. The fact that these goods were imported by regular category holders did not detract from the urgency of a fresh and bold appraisal of the national economy. These 'holders' of 'categories' became the holders of privilege and wielders of power which was exercised at the expense of common consumers.. Can you imagine a betel-seller having his "category made" for the import of motor parts and artificial silk yarn? Permits thus secured were sold at a premium which ranged from 500 to 700 per cent. What is more, these permits changed hands several times before the goods were actually imported. Each transaction added to the value of the permit, the cumulative price was, in many cases, four to five times more than the imported price. The open general licence was no more, but there was an open black market for those generally interested in buying and selling import licences. The non-existent business concerns who were granted licences, quotas and permits swayed the black market which flourished from day to day. An industrial survey, prepared by the Ministry of Industries a few months before the Revolution, pointed out such cases but no official action was taken because the recipients were either protected by corrupt civil servants or shielded by politicians. But evil has strange ways of multiplying, the parties in power liberally doled out licences to Assembly members who were suspected of crossing the floor and joining the

opposite camp. Paradoxically enough, these barter deals did not prolong the life of the ministry; it only raised the market price of the members who blackmailed both the ruling party and the opposition expected to become Government any day.

Thus started the spiral of high prices and inflation; our national earnings continued to fall and the expenditure continued to swell in both the productive and unproductive sectors. The foreign exchange reserves shrunk to Rs. 50 crores; the balance of payments reached the lowest level. The deficit of Rs. 26.7 crores during 1956-57 increased to Rs. 31.5 crores during 1957-58. There was further deterioration during the second half of 1958. They resorted to deficit financing but it was no solution, as the result was still more inflation. The currency notes were so much in excess of the gold held by the State Bank against them that they had to be revalued twice to maintain the statutory ratio. They had thrust the nation so deep down in the economic morass that truth had to be told and the doom formally announced. During the budget session, the Finance Minister of the last Government stood up to "inform" the nation that the country had gone "bankrupt." The Army took over the country—and bankruptcy. The truth-trumpeting came a little too late.

They did all this and much more but they

were never chary of claiming that Pakistan had made phenomenal progress. It is true that Pakistan had made great strides in the development of industries like cotton and woollen textiles, rerolling of iron and steel, manufacture of power engines and cycles, production of cement and sugar, but what about industries like art silk manufacture, assembly plants which are an adjunct to powerful commercial concerns abroad and other industries which entirely depend on the outside world for the supply of raw materials. Thus, the tragedy is not that we failed to register any progress but that we succeeded in creating an unbalanced economy. Even a casual look at the old Governments' development and building schemes would create the odd impression that while they had sanctioned huge expenditure for certain doubtful schemes, there was almost nothing for certain vital projects. This lopsided development was occasionally carried to a ludicrous extent; at a meeting in Dacca the East Pakistan representatives insisted on having foreign exchange for 'electric bulbs and galvanized pipes' industries because West Pakistan had already been granted foreign exchange for this purpose. The sponsors of Karachi Irrigation Scheme had sanctioned six crores for the development of the area around Hub river; after spending about a crore, the project had to be abandoned. Thus, the schemes for new industrial units were never subjected to a thorough economic

'scrutiny and financial calculus but sanctioned on political and "other" considerations. "This lack of planning," as a spokesman of the new regime put it, 'had resulted in an adverse balance of trade and consequent depletion of our foreign exchange resources. Industries which involved considerable recurring expenditure of foreign exchange were haphazardly set up in big cities without taking into account the strategic and economic implications of these ventures. Industrial policy had more or less degenerated into subservience to political favouritism and nepotism. Certain industries which were not suited to the country were also allowed to be set up in the boom period of foreign exchange and such industries were now a liability for the country. The very fact that such industries cannot be fed even to the tune of 20 per cent of their requirements in imported raw materials shows that their establishment was unwarranted. Actually, those industries should have been promoted in the first instance which could depend on indigenous raw materials or could either earn or save foreign exchange."

This brings us to the core of the problem. They failed to fix priorities of work. It was the problem of knowing what we want immediately, of realising our limitations and attempting only what we can achieve. In other words, we had first to learn to sift the chaff from the grain, and establish proper discrimination standards

to separate the important from the unimportant. If we had looked after the essential things, the non-essential things would have looked after themselves.

The enthusiasm of a new-born nation is proverbial. We wanted to change the face of things overnight and make Pakistan a modern and progressive country. This spirit of adventure and passion for new experiments was understandable but as our 'go-ahead' zeal was not tempered with caution and our planning not accompanied by clear thinking, we were about to end up like the spinster who is leading a loveless life because she wanted to marry the handsomest and the richest man in the world. As we wanted to do everything we began to believe that everything was important. But experience has shown that if we begin to think that every problem is important we soon begin to behave in a manner which would create the impression that we do not perhaps attach importance to any problem. We all know the fate of files which were marked "urgent" and "immediate" by government officials. When the "top priority" flag was affixed the officer sending the papers knew that it had really no meaning and the officer receiving the papers knew that the file had to be treated in a routine manner. Thus, we failed to realise what we had to do, what we could do, how much we had to do and how best we could do it. All these years the bane of our planning has been lack of planning.

In Oriental countries, the bridegroom is prominently and characteristically dressed and 'made up' so that none of the 'other men' are mistaken for him. Our planning has been either full of bridegrooms without the 'other men' or full of 'other men' without the bridegroom.

The politicians lived from moment to moment; they only concerned themselves with stop-gap arrangements temporary palliatives, and interim measures. They seldom seriously tried to look at the country as a whole to understand all its problems, to fix priorities, and to proceed and plan accordingly. They were perhaps so busy in the immediate and day-to-day matters that they lost sight of the long-term and larger telescopic view. They behaved like the rustic folks who are so engrossed in the multi-entertainment fancy fair that they have no mood and no eyes for a clear perspective of the crowd and cavalcade. The smarter fellows perched on tree tops not only see more of fun but enjoy a detached and panoramic view of things. They were so completely lost in the jungle of intrigues and bogged by mutual fear and steeped in power politics, that even if some of them resolved to do the right thing, it was undone before the decision could be executed. This lack of determination and sense of balance led them to try many experiments, but, today we find that all these years they have been only busy bungling.

Thus, there was such a craze for industrialization that industry in Pakistan came to mean non-agricultural activity. And yet, we all know that agriculture is our main industry, but our depressed industry, like the depressed classes in India; more than eighty per cent of our people live in villages and depend on land for their means of livelihood. I believe that modern industrial development in Pakistan has been boosted at the expense of agriculture. To what extent we have let our agricultural economy languish during the years that followed the birth of Pakistan is evidenced by the percentages of cotton and jute production in the Indian subcontinent and in the two countries after partition. The total production and consumption of cotton in the subcontinent was about 4 million bales; India used to export short staple and import long staple cotton. The part of the subcontinent which now comprises India produced 2.5 and Pakistan 1.5 million bales. Today, the position is that India produces yearly 4 million bales of cotton and Pakistan has not gone beyond 1.5 million bales. India used to produce 25 per cent and Pakistan 75 per cent of jute on the eve of partition; today, India produces 55 per cent and Pakistan 45 per cent.

What I have said above generally applies to every aspect of planning and field of development. But the 'final decision' ever taken by members of the old ruling

gentry was seldom subjected to certain basic conditions and considerations like (a) how many people are going to benefit from it, (b) what will be its moral effect on national life (c) how lasting are its expected advantages; (d) how will we appear in the eyes of posterity if we do it, etc.

But, for them these considerations were perhaps not weighty enough; how they toyed with the finances of the country is a staggering story of wastages. Here is a post-Revolution disclosure of "50-crores down the drain"; few economies in the world could survive such severe strains:

"From Independence up to the end of the financial year 1957-58 the East Pakistan Provincial exchequer has sustained a loss of over Rs. 50 crores. Of this as much as Rs. 30 crores represent losses sustained since 1954-55. These consist of about Rs. 27 crores lost on current account, about Rs. 10 crores on the advancing of loans to cultivators and others and about Rs. 13 crores on the procurement and sale of foodgrains. This last mentioned loss is in addition to the subsidy of Rs. 18 crores given by the Central Government on account of the sale of foodgrains...

"In order to meet these losses the Province, apart from taking loans and advances of over 23 crores from the Central Government exhausted its cash balances

representing deposits held by the Government in its capacity as a banker for provident fund subscribers, local bodies etc. and also ran a heavy overdraft, which at one time exceeded Rs. 14 crores with the State Bank of Pakistan.

"In the revenue budget of a province its expenditure on current account is to be met out of current income. Persistent failure to balance the budget, evidenced by the accumulated deficits of Rs. 27 crores means that the previous Governments were grossly overspending without reference to the resources available. This refusal on the part of the previous Governments to live within their means has been sharply accentuated since 1954-55. The rise in the cost of Government in the last four years has been phenomena; revenue expenditure, which in 1955-56 was Rs. 28.94 crores had risen in the budget estimates of 1958-59 to Rs. 41.5 crores, although additional revenue raised in the meantime amounted to some Rs. 60 lakhs only.

"During this period the cost of Government establishment alone rose by as much as 20 per cent although the increase in the scope and intensity of Governmental activities could not possibly justify such a large expansion of staff. In many cases posts were created without proper scrutiny of their justification and merely to provide for certain favoured persons. Such reckless

' extravagance brought the Province to the brink of bankruptcy. On the other hand, collection of revenue was, for the sake of courting popularity, interfered with. In the last three years over Rs. 2,00,00,000 due to Government as agricultural loan and interest on arrears of rent have been remitted.

"The efforts of the Board of Revenue to stimulate collections were thwarted by political interference and the statutory powers available for taking action against the defaulters were considerably diminished. As a result, arrears of land revenue now stand at about Rs. 12 crores.

"The previous Governments were continually bemoaning their own lack of resources, which, in fact, resulted largely from their own reckless and wasteful expenditure on the one hand and failure to collect their revenues on the other. Nevertheless, partly for political reasons and partly to cover their own inefficient and extravagant handling of their finances, they kept on throwing the blame on the Centre and pressing it to increase its assistance to the Province, even beyond the limit of resources which they themselves knew to be available to the Centre.

"In fact they continued pressing for additional financial assistance for development purposes even though the provincial Government had never been able

to utilise all the development loans amounting to over Rs. 100 crores, which had been placed at their disposal by the Centre since Independence.

"They did not hesitate even to misuse funds intended for much-needed development of the Province. Expenditure on projects, many of low priority, was begun without proper sanction and in violation of the established rules. For example, work on a number of roads was taken up without any consideration of the road priority programme, because they were in the constituencies of certain Ministers or other influential persons. Two hostels for MPAs in Dacca were hurriedly constructed on the orders of a Chief Minister and without prior preparation or sanction of estimates."

Even if it is conceded that they could not overpower certain factors inherent in the economic situation, what prevented them from adopting and enforcing preventive measures against the evil of smuggling? The smugglers in East Pakistan had become so adept and adroit in the art of smuggling that nothing less than "Operation Close Door" by the Army could shake them. Smuggling had been going deeper and deeper into the substratum of our economy; how subtle and serious it was, can be judged by the following account submitted to the authorities by a Public Relations Officer of the Army:

"From a secret, clandestine unlawful activity, it had emerged into a perfectly open and legitimate trade of which every one had the painful knowledge, but none the power to control. The common man who was the hardest hit by the scandalous traffic had got himself into a mood to resign to it as an act of destiny.

"Smuggling in East Pakistan, broadly speaking, is of two types, visible and invisible. Visible smuggling which consists in carrying things physically across the border through land and water routes has been practically stopped. It is the menace of the invisible smuggling which still remains to be countered.

"Invisible smuggling in East Pakistan is like a fantastic spider's web enmeshing the entire economic life of the province. Its fine texture and ramifications are too subtly conceived and formed to be visible to the naked eye; and yet its grip is so strong and reach so wide that nothing in the province is safe from it. Invisible smuggling is the cleverest device the smugglers' ingenuity could have conceived to deceive the administration—the police, the customs and the law. Transactions worth crores of rupees are effected under the very nose of the authority through the ingenious 'chit' and 'hundi' system cheating the Government of huge sums of money.

"Under the 'chit' and 'hundi' system, two firms

incorporated in two foreign countries could transact business on their own without the knowledge or the permission of the administration.

"Personal undertakings are given in writing to honour the deal; and where even this would not be possible bargains are made over the telephone. In any country with an administration, army, police and a legal machinery, such a state of affairs cannot be allowed to persist.

"Another devious way of cheating the administration used by the master-minds of invisible smuggling is by under-valuing exports and over-valuing imports. A bale of jute meant for export actually valuing rupees one hundred is quoted at rupees ninety thus diminishing the foreign exchange earning of the exporting country by ten per cent.

"Conversely, cloth priced actually at rupee one per yard is quoted at rupees one and a half per yard while being imported and the importing country has to pay more of the foreign exchange in consequence.

"Use of false and bogus passports is yet another method, the smugglers employ to arrange transfer of currency across the border. Hired agents are passed as members of the smuggler's family each carrying Rs. 50 in Indian currency. These carriers normally travel on

- ‘B’ category visa which enables them to make repeated visits to India in course of a year. There are thousands of these agents making repeated trips across the border, carrying each time valuable foreign exchange with them.

“From one sub-division Brahmanbaria alone, money to the tune of ten lakhs of rupees goes out every year through large scale use of bogus passports. During searches carried out by the anti-smuggling personnel, one person alone was found having 1,040 of such passports.

“Inflated salary receipts from generally low-paid servants and menials is another of the smugglers’ devices to drain foreign exchange out of Pakistan. These servants are generally Indians working in Pakistan. They hold ‘F’ category visas which allow them to stay in Pakistan so long as they are employed by a Pakistani firm or individual and they can remit substantial parts of their earnings to their families across the border. In a number of cases these servants—mostly cooks and peons—were shown in their salary-receipts to be drawing as much as rupees two hundred a month as their salary and allowances. All this brings back nothing from India but depreciation in the value of Pakistani currency.

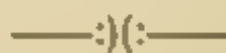
“As for gold, the best and the easiest way to smuggle it is by converting bullion into crude ornaments.

Young girls masqueraded as brides cross the border , laden with gold ornaments. The same girls return to Pakistan after sometime stripped of all their valuables. The excuse for the missing property would be that the girl had been divorced and deprived of everything by her oppressors."

Another by-product of smuggling was under-invoicing which, in the words of Major-General Umrao Khan "seems more perilous than what may be called naked smuggling. It has been going on under the cover of governmental facilities accorded to normal trade between East Pakistan and the neighbouring State. Export of perishable goods, including movement of goods through headloads, gold and currency racket, come under this category. We have detected cases of a chronic type of under-invoicing with regard to export of fish, vegetable and such other perishable commodities. If the market price of fish, at any time, was, say, Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 a seer the valuation shown in the relevant documents of exports during the same period fell below the market price by three to four hundred per cent. In this way, we have been losing not only our country's natural wealth, but also sustaining heavy losses on two counts, namely, internal revenue and foreign exchange earnings. When valuation of dutiable goods is shown below the standard value, we lose revenue in the shape of customs duty, levied in proportion to the value of the goods. Likewise,

- when goods worth Rs. 2,000 are actually exported with a declared valuation of Rs. 200 we would earn foreign exchange only to the extent of the valuation declared, and not in proportion to the actual value of the goods."

It would have been perhaps forgivable if it were a case of oversight and our old masters had failed to detect holes in our development plans. They had perhaps as much right to commit mistakes as any human individual. But it was not merely a tragedy of failures; our economic pattern betrayed a crisis in our morals, a split in our souls. When they subordinated national good to personal aggrandizement, it was symptomatic of a malaise which nipped our budding personality as a people who strove to establish an ideal Islamic State. It was like a tree torn by its own roots; the leaves began to wither and we were shriveled into logs of wood. How we feel a victim to this national plague of corruption is the subject of my next Chapter.



CHAPTER VIII

GRAFT AND GREED

"Corruption, bribery and nepotism. . . it is a horrible disease. . ."

Quaid-i-Azam

GRAFT AND GREED

We have seen how the nation's economy was choked by the long-jam of corruption, privilege and shady business deals. To a degree, it was understandable, as Pakistan opened up vast opportunities for development at all levels; but the politicians who contracted this disease, made it a national cancer, a routine thing, a matter of habit. Even the wealthiest country in the world cannot afford the 'luxury' of corruption; we could only practise it at our peril. I have always believed that corruption is like that gluttonous worm within us, comfortably cushioned against the stomach, who devours all the vitamins and calories administered to the body. Children who suffer from this disease never grow up, in spite of all the kisses and caresses and parental fondling. Thus, let a government spend millions and billions on the body-politic, but all the money will disappear like water in the sand if the cogs in the administrative mechanism are rotten. Demanding bribe, seeking graft and extorting undue concessions vitiated the whole atmosphere and created the disastrous impression on the common people in Pakistan that perhaps no one in our country could go about his business and operate as an honest man. You must forget about the normal means, the constitutional method, the gentlemanly approach if

you really want a thing done—to your satisfaction. You must always be prepared to grease somebody's palm—whether it is a question of securing a vote or a job or promotion, issuing an import licence or even an export licence, raising funds for a party or a sanatorium, buying a ticket or tooth paste or Chevro et, selling an idea or book or scotch tape, building a house or a school, establishing a new industrial unit or a maternity home, opening a shop or an orphanage centre, sanctioning money for an irrigation project or playgrounds in a growing city, getting admission into a hospital or an engineering college.

The story is related of a fellow who lay bare on a footpath under the scorching summer sun. A passerby who could not bear the sight asked him to move in the shade under a nearby tree. "Sure, but what are you going to pay me?" This is symbolic of the evil of corruption which took toll of our moral lives, every day, everywhere.

All these years we have been hearing of commissions and committees to enquire into matters as diverse as Liaquat's assassination and freighter crash, food crisis and failure at Helsinki. But our ex-rulers never thought of an enquiry commission, manned by Supreme Court Judges, to conduct a probe into corruption which had permeated all departments of our national life. And, whenever we learnt that an anti-corruption crusade is about to be launched, all we had to read in newspapers

was that peon of tehsildar had been fined rupees five, a panwalla had been hauled up for charging half an anna extra for a packet of cigarettes, and a patwari in Jaranwala had been suspended. The smaller fries in the frying pan seldom provided an index to the sharks which stealthily escaped from the back door. What we really needed was a high-powered judicial commission to report on such cases where public men—Governors, Ministers, party leaders—were found guilty of:

(a) weakening the political and economic foundations of Pakistan in the discharge of their duties as public dignitaries;

(b) Overt acts of commission which could only be committed by those who misuse their positions of power.

More specifically, what we needed was some sort of a permanent Committee for the prevention of such activities, dealing largely with the conduct of public men. Firstly, its deliberations should have been confined to cases of indiscretion—like wasting public money, unwittingly giving out State secrets, misbehaving towards members of the public etc. In private life, one is immediately penalised for such acts by the inexorable forces of society and economic competition. But, in public life, the guilty are often able to save their skins with the help of their official or political position.

In the second category of public offences come those who accept bribes, secure allotments or demand a share in business deals because they happen to occupy a position of authority and patronage. Again, in private life, such cases hardly go undetected or unpunished because the aggrieved party enjoys the protection of law courts. But, in public life, many cases of corruption are scarcely reported and seldom taken up for enquiry because the guilty happen to be in possession of power—the power that gave them a chance to be corrupt is the power they misuse for their protection and safety.

When PRODA (Public and Representative Offices Disqualification Act) began its 'abnormal operations' in 1949, it did not add 'a new word to the language and a new institution to the machinery of government' but a new chapter to the biographical anthology of politicians. It was an Act "to provide for the debarring from public life for a suitable period of persons judicially found guilty of misconduct in any public office or representative capacity or in any matter relating thereto." The politicians, ministers and other public leaders were so scared that they called it "a form of impeachment", a coercive measure and a potent weapon which could be misused. Thus, PRODA was repealed, "because the Assembly thought it had been misused" Thus, an instrument designed to combat corruption at the highest

level fell a prey to corruption—it agreed to be misused. But, meanwhile, PRODA had almost acquired the personality of a public prosecutor and moral censor. This is how I chose to express public opinion in the country which was strongly arrayed against its abrogation:—

‘Mr Proda has been found guilty and dismissed. It will be recalled that this honourable gentleman was appointed some years ago to catch the corrupt among the high public dignitaries but since there appears to be a general premium on corruption, he has been overpowered and now lies prostrate, licking the sacred dust of Pakistan. He was commissioned by the Quaid-i-Azam to create a nation of gentlemen, but our gentlemen thought that he was a Frankenstein created to destroy them. Many say that he was one of the finest gentlemen Pakistan has so far produced. he was loved by the lowliest and feared by the highest in the land. Restrictions were recently imposed on the public activities of Mr. Proda and he was deprived of some of his dictatorial powers but, strangely enough, even his emaciated form seemed to strike terror into the hearts of our politicians.

‘The charges against him are grave enough. It is said that Mr. Proda is not only an alien but is not even a denizen of this world because there is no gentleman like him in any country. Must we say that he was supposed to deal with gentlemen the like of whom we don’t

find anywhere in the world. The second charge against Mr. Proda is that he always chose to hang over the Ministers' heads like the proverbial sword of Democles and thus demoralised our patriotic politicians. In other words, he is guilty of preventing and obstructing our leaders from performing their duties as public servants. But, if Mr. Proda represented the fear of public opinion, and our ministers are afraid of public opinion, why don't they leave public life, and choose a more private profession. The third charge against Mr. Proda is that he easily allowed himself to be 'misused.' According to anti-Prodaists, it is quite a serious allegation because in a country like Pakistan where ministers are always in danger of being misused, the presence of a gentleman who lets his position be abused by others is highly prejudicial to public peace and stable government.

'We know that we are defending a dead man but we believe that the sad and sudden demise of Mr. Proda should provoke us not to shed tears but to shed our complacency about the men who happen to rule Pakistan today. His unceremonious departure from our public life is indeed shocking but, perhaps, not surprising; we can hardly expect our leaders to forge weapons for their own liquidation. Mr. Proda's most criminal offence, according to them, was to initiate a regime of fear—he set one group against another group of politicians. And, funnily enough, each politician thought he could browbeat his

opponent with the unqualified support of Mr. Proda. Thus Mr. Proda smartly kept everybody in the dark. As no Government can smoothly function in an atmosphere surcharged with fear, Mr. Proda had no option but to quit. The fact that 'any case pending before Mr. Proda would be withdrawn' is not a parting kiss but a parting kick to the gentleman. We can only marvel at those who openly say that, in view of his past conduct, Mr. Proda had to go but all those whom he tried yesterday 'would not be affected' by his exit today."

The Qaid-i-Azam had conceived PRODA to purge Pakistan's public life of all disloyal and dishonest elements. If PRODA suffered from any inherent flaws, they could be removed but the Act could be retained. The purgatorial mission of PRODA was given up as a bad job, as it made everybody censurable and created a climate of fear in which our public men could not fulfil their public obligations!

The end of PRODA was the beginning of corruption in other forms. The manner in which our servicemen had become the handmaid of politicians and the extent to which the administrative machinery was subjected to ministerial pressure is a shameful but true story. The anti-Qadiani Punjab Disturbances Report and the Report on the Sargodha District Board Elections threw lurid light on this canker in our pre-Revolution public life. The first report, said, "we are prompted by

something that they call a human conscience to enquire whether in our present state of political development, the administrative problem of law and order cannot be divorced from a democratic bed-fellow called a ministerial government which is so remorselessly haunted by political nightmares. But if democracy means the subordination of law and order to political ends, then Allan knoweth best and we end the report." The Sargodha report said, "the important principle that the political party in power must, in the interest of democracy practise self-abnegation and not expect of the permanent services any concession which it would resent being shown to other political parties was thrown overboard."

Thus, the malady became so deep-seated and dangerous that it was potentially capable of destroying the whole fabric of our political life as it cut at the root of the values which we should have been anxious to promote if we were sincerely wedded to the democratic way of life.

How did it happen? Some of the provincial governments issued directives to district officials that they must "co-operate with the MPAs who happened to be the representatives of the people." It was the opening of an era which subordinated administrative ends to political ends. The local officers became tools in the hands of local MPAs and the entire administration was subjected to the whims and wishes of politicians. With every shift

of power, these politicians would expect Deputy Commissioners and Police Superintendents of their own choice. In fact they frankly told the ministry in power that they would not be able to canvass support and secure votes for their party or group unless the chief district officers were prepared to tow their line.

Thus, for instance, with every ministerial change in former Punjab there was a corresponding change at the top secretariat level and all the key posts were assigned to officers who were considered 'desirable' and 'useful' for the group in power. On the lower level of the official hierarchy, when the Deputy Commissioners and Police Superintendents were "men of their choice", the Tehsildars and Thanedars had no option but to 'obey' their higher officers. These junior district officers were, in fact, the key men who were not only exploited for political purposes but also for securing all types of concessions—more-than-reasonable quotas of controlled commodities, reductions in land revenue, and even release of *goondas* and bad characters. This is the least price they expected from ruling politicians for their effective support to the group in power.

What is more, they consciously tried to create opportunities of publicly mixing with the officers with a view to exhibiting their intimacy with the local officialdom; they had to convince the public that 'they can get

things done. In turn, local politicians saw to it that the official on the top was impressed with their close relationship with the ministry which would be useful to the official in achieving his purposes like transfer, promotion and other benefits. The local politicians would tell their political superiors that they could only deliver the goods if there was an unmistakable impression in the public mind that they are the masters and not servants of the local administration.

This position was bound to lead to the following consequences:

1. With every change of ministry, 'transfers, promotions, and appointments' was considered a priority job. They must have their own men in key posts: since it was not only a wish but a regular practice, most of our officers had to bear hardships which few can imagine. In former Punjab, for instance, the average stay of a Deputy Commissioner in a district comes to about six months though normally it should have been at least two years.

2. Just at the time when the local officers began to understand the local problems and get down to brass tacks, they were transferred; and the whole administration fell into the hands of subordinate staff. This practice not only lowered the level of administration but opened the door to corruption and nepotism.

3. The Police emerged as the most powerful of local agencies as they represented a section of administration which had the most direct dealings with the people. They and they alone were in a position to 'buy' votes, to round up voters and do hundred and one non-descript types of jobs for the ruling group or party. Some of our higher police officers would have never liked to encourage these practices, but the fact is that, in spite of them we saw in recent years the growth of police totalitarianism in tehsils and districts.

Thus, some of our officers were so servilely tied to the apron strings of changing and changeable ministries that what is commonly called "administrative efficiency" became a bye-word in Pakistan. Thus, every attempt to forge a system of interference with the day-to-day administration of the country led to frustration and demoralisation and, ultimately, prepared the death of perhaps the most valuable democratic ideal—Justice.

How could we ensure the civil services against political depredations? I happened to suggest some years ago that the only way to do it was to take away from the ministers the much-abused power of "appointments, promotions and transfers" and give it to a Public Service Commission as in Australia and Canada. Ministries and individual ministers could be encouraged to recommend to the Commission cases of able and honest officers for

' promotion and also report cases of corrupt and inefficient officers for proper action. Secondly the members of the Commission should be appointed by the Head of the State but, the power of dismissing any member should vest in the Parliament. And again to ensure against possible abuse of authority, it should be laid down that a favourable vote of not less than three-fourth of the members of the Parliament shall be necessary before a motion for dismissal of a member of the Commission could be passed. The idea could not produce any converts among politicians, they took it as an attack on their tenderest spot.

Thus, there were more and more cases of corruption and inefficiency in our civil service, it was bound to happen because, if the top is rotten the evil was bound to percolate like excrementitious matter in the sewerage, down to the lower ranks. There were officers who did not deviate from the straight and narrow path of rectitude but there were others who thought that the best way to resist a temptation was to yield to it. It was discovered that business groups had their pay-offs in Government offices. How far politicians corrupted officers and officers corrupted politicians and business men corrupted both, is perhaps a debatable point but what is not doubtful is that if they mutually agreed to benefit each other, no weak Government could break

the r combine Our Public Works Department, particularly, gained a notoriety which could only be surpassed by the black service records of its dismissed employees.

Maik Qadir Bakhsh report on the conduct of civil servants was suppressed and its author driven to political wilderness. The press summary which appeared in the fall of 1951 seemed to suggest that the whole administrative machinery had gone out of gear, and a large number of Government workers had not only become shirkers but connived at corruption even when they were not guilty of accepting any illegal gratification. It appeared to be the ambition of every Government employee to have an assistant; if he managed to get one, the assistant would like to have his own assistant. Thus, few cared to understand a case or study a file, the difficult part of the work was invariably passed on to subordinates.

Corruption, nepotism, favouritism and procrastination were found to be allied evils, partially generated by the existing administrative machinery and reinforced by the old antiquated rules of procedure. Corruption has always acted as the foster child of red-tapism and *sifarish*. In many cases, inordinate delay was caused by filing and noting which led to *sifarish* and *sifarish* led to corruption; if there were no *sifarish*, most of the cases would be decided on merit.

But, corruption was not confined to bribery; it had myriad manifestations in the everyday life of the people. Few could fathom the depths of moral degradation when the Army struck: the Revolution came when they were perhaps performing the last funeral rites.

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CHAPTER IX

ON THE PYRE

*'We are going through fire, the
sunshine has yet to come, are
you prepared to undergo the fire?'*

—Quaid-i-Azam



ON THE PYRE

The tragedy of Pakistan is the failure of its political leadership. All these years they have been speaking fine words but fine words did not butter Pakistani parsnips. They have been making promises which were as inflated and as empty as a balloon. They have been shouting slogans, signifying nothing. They have been raising issues which always turned out to be their personal issues. They have been appealing in the name of democracy but destroying every known semblance of democratic decency. They have been professing love of the people but loving more the exploitation of the people. There were few among them whose heart could bleed for Pakistan, who felt for the country and who could shed a tear for the people. They cast aside all legal and moral norms which were not sanctioned by the dictates of political expediency. They never had the heart to stand up and do the right thing in the right way, even at the cost of being misunderstood and the risk of being ousted from the political field. They referred to corruption in as tender terms as men speak of their children but it appeared so futile and farcical as the clean-up operations always stayed at the bottom rung. Their ways of thinking and feeling had become constrictive of reform and destructive of progress, whether it was a question of eliminating wastages or curbing

malpractices or redefining the meaning of Islamic polity. They found dangerous trends developing in the country but they continued to be as intriguing as the Italian mosaic, as callous as the Machiavellian prince and as factious as the old French barons. They behaved, as a philosopher put it, "like a rabbit fascinated by a snake", but stared at the peril without making any effort to avert it. Like an indisciplined herd, they were heading towards a precipice and yet some of them believed that they were nearing a millennium. It was a case of political myopia; there was fog in their mind and a veil on their eyes which blurred their vision and beclouded their judgment. Like actors in a Greek drama, they could not even see their own fate in the mirror which reflected the national scene when the Revolution came. Little did they realise how quickly greed could lead to grave and how the days that separate the crown from the coffin could be immeasurably small.

But, perhaps, coming events cast their shadows on their ominous lives; as the Revolution was drawing nearer, we had more and more ministers representing less and less of public opinion. It did not add an inch to their stature or made the Government less unrepresentative, it merely heightened the sense of separateness and feeling of aloofness, as they were every day marching away from the people. They claimed to be one with the people, but it was like a couple divorced in spirit; the

legal ties are there but not the heart and passion, because it was a forced matrimony, without the bond of love. The glamour of police guard, the cool comfort of a saloon and the fascination of the flag created a climate of remoteness in which they made a conscious effort to look, behave and act in a characteristic manner. A minister from the former Frontier province thrice stopped the car on his way to Peshawar as the flag thrice got wrapped up round the cold steel rod and refused to flutter. But they could not feel the flutter of hearts that belonged to millions of Pakistanis; they let the passion of a few dominate the passion of many. The privileged few had their luxuries when there was not enough for the necessities of all. Their riotous living did not even let them see the slums where Pakistani humans were strewn like so many splinters on the ground, where the poor measured their daily miseries, where disease dominated, where children were born to die, where age ruled and youth withered, where destitute women were sold for a dime and where every day of life was streamlined by toil and tears. Eleven years after Pakistan, the refugees were still huddled together in huts and hovels but few were moved by the squalor of their sub-human habitations.

They had no respite from power politics; acquiring a ministership was infinitely easier than retaining it, and resigning it was beyond the pale of their policy. There have been ministers who were publicly exposed, con-

'demned and even abused but they refused to resign. They openly said that they would wreck the chair before abdicating it. They were so maddened by this wanton thirst for office that they would follow power in the darkest alleys. In a democracy, power goes to the majority but, in the brand of democracy they developed, majority goes to the power. Thus 'crossing the floor' became the bane of our political life. They changed the r parties as quickly and conveniently as men change their bush-shirts during the summer, Hollywood stars change their spouses and denizens of the red-light area change their beds. It became such a nauseating sight and such an exasperating experience that people nervously waited for anything to happen any moment.

The leader of a party employs all the casuistry and sophistry at his command to wean away a member in the stillness of night but, in spite of tempting baits, few were surprised to find the member enjoy his breakfast in the opposite camp. It is said that politics makes strange bed-follows; the wooing and the dissent members did not discover before dawn the nature of the spring mattress on which they slept together, so that they had a chance to wonder whether it was a night or nightmare. If personal appeals, generous offers and formal overtures failed to convince the member, they resorted to underhand means, pressure tactics and hit-

below-the-belt technique. If nothing made the rebel member ready and ripe for a final surrender, the last hope was religion; with their feet in the mosque, their hands on the Quran and their faces towards Mecca, they solemnly pledged allegiance to the new party and swore to serve it at all costs. The scene over, they ate their words and broke their promise; nothing was on oath but on an understanding based on conditions which had changed after their decision to desert the old party. For the simple people of Pakistan, it was a rignmarole, but not for those who were bound to betray.

There was perhaps nothing inherently wrong with choosing a new party but it was done so often and with such dramatic suddenness that it thoroughly corrupted and disgraced our political life. In the absence of sufficient provocation to change party affiliations, the practice was basically wrong and immoral. Secondly, it was an affront to the electorate who chose a particular candidate on a party ticket. Thirdly, it inevitably led to corruption and subjected the whole body-politic to influences and pressures that took the wind out of the torn sails of democracy. Fourthly, the shifting scene of party loyalties and alignments made it impossibly difficult for any stable government to function. Lastly, it retarded the growth of political parties on genuine democratic lines. It was suggested by many that they should make it

- (constitutionally difficult for any elected man to change his party without resigning his seat. But they were not prepared even to consider the proposal, who could question them or even blame them if they did not like to trust their own conscience.

There was such a catastrophic depreciation of the values of life and standards of private and public morality that every important appointment was hailed, every shift of power was welcomed, every official stand was supported. The people were indifferent or, at least, neutral, as they perhaps, vainly believed that the new government would attend to the problems which the old government had failed to solve. But, the changing Governments in Pakistan produced a new class of courtiers, flatterers, time-servers and opportunists who worshipped, as they say, the rising sun and forgot overnight their dead benefactors. Thus, the top men of every ruling coterie were surrounded by sycophants who were tutored to deify the gods that had power and patronage, respect only those who exercised official influence, and be afraid of only those who were holding the fiat of authority.

They developed a unique taste for bootlicking. It just does not matter whether it is a pair of Jodhpur Boots, Jungle Boots, Ranger Boots, Gum Boots, Jack Boots, Desert Boots, Wellington Boots, or the popular

Bata MazBoot. It also does not matter whether the boots are made of suede, canvas, chrome, kid leather, crocodile, pig skin, buck skin, snake skin or even lizard skin. The only condition for licking was that the boot in question must be the boot in power. It must have the kick of authority and stamp of office. There is no question of vanity, sanity or urbanity: They must lick the boot if the boot offers them the advantages they have been seeking. Again, it does not matter if the shoe pinches. It does not even matter if the boot is on the other leg, for it is not their job to put the shoe on the right foot. For them, the only commercial course was to discard those who got the boots and keep the new boots in shape. And, those brave men who had died in their boots deserved less attention than the expectant successors to the dead man's shoes. But the moment these political carcasses showed the slightest sign of resurrection, they rushed forward with boot laces, boot polish and shoe-horn, as each one of them was anxious to score as the best bootlicker. There was no question of honour as self-interest was more important than self-respect; they could only brighten their prospects if they hastened to brighten the boot in power. And, thanks to the publicity means at their disposal, there was no fear of public opinion or social censure. Even the Courts could not take cognizance of this offence as the Law can only deal with bootlifters and bootleggers, not bootlickers. They were also not afraid

of any religious sanctions as mullahs, the managing agents of religion, have always liked and licked the boot in power. If bootmaking in Pakistan had become an industry which needed protection, bootlicking had become a trade which gave protection to every succeeding government. And, they had their reward, though eterna vigilance was the price. They became 'power profiteers', though their only asset was their better taste for bootlicking. For the people, they were the worst type of black-marketeers as they made a fortune out of nothing.

Thanks to the mounting tide of toadyism, the highest tribute we could pay to a man in our country was that "he is not a bootlicker." It was hard to pay this compliment as the political climate of Pakistan had become so favourable to the growth of this despicable class that one could scarcely survive without operating as somebody's stooge. Many came to be satisfied with this status because, when they looked up, they found that the occupants of highest offices were obsequiously working for a master.

Again, our ex-rulers had lost all capacity to debate an issue on merit and failed to show that liberal and tolerant spirit which is the essence of both Islam and democracy. This attitude of intellectual arrogance balked every effort to resolve differences in an atmos-

phere free from hatred and violence. Thus, it almost became a fashion in Pakistan to parade your patriotism by calling your political opponents 'traitors' who were working against the interests of the State. In all free countries it is rarely that we hear of traitors who are in league with foreign powers to overthrow their popular government through violent means. And, whenever, in these countries, men are found guilty of spying they are tried as traitors and not a little finger is raised to protest against the punishment awarded to them. But, here, this grave charge was so commonly levelled against so many persons and on so many occasions that nobody liked to take it seriously.

A few months before the Revolution, a Muslim League leader challenged a Republican minister to furnish documentary proof before pronouncing leaders of another party as "traitors." The minister accepted the challenge with the qualification that it was not in 'public interest' to publish the document but it could be privately examined. But, according to the League leader, the Republican could not question others' patriotism when he had been 'basking under the sunshine of Hindu Congress.' An East Pakistan leader of the National Awami Party was time and again called a Communist, a Moscow hireling, an Indian spy and a traitor who believed more in the art of subversion than in the

ideology of Pakistan. Then, speeches were delivered from the Muslim League platform purporting to prove that the Awami League leaders were "traitors" and "agents", working for the goal of "Akhand Bharat."

Thus by trying to prefer serious charges against their political adversaries without being able to prove them, they created a sense of irresponsibility in our public life and introduced an element of cynicism, falsehood and even violence in our politics. Secondly, in a country like Pakistan, when their failure to substantiate an allegation was not even followed by an explanation, it served the set purpose of confusing the issues and misleading public opinion. On the other hand, in a country like the United States, Senator MaCarthy was hounded out of public life even though he said something which was perhaps in the hearts and minds of millions of Americans. But his only fault was that he exaggerated the situation and misled the people. Thirdly, when Pakistan's top political leaders gravely talked of powerful anti-State elements within our frontiers, it was bound to create an impression in foreign minds that this country was doomed to die.

This treachery talk assumed a new meaning when an advocate of separate electorate warned that the real aim of the anti-Islamic forces in the country was to create

circumstances leading to the annexation of Pakistan by India. According to him, this threat to Pakistan was represented by the Republicans, the Awami League and the National Awami Party, who were "the enemies of the State" because they supported the joint poll method. Thus, Islam became the football of party politics; it was hit from all sides and the electorate issue became a religious controversy. The issue was so fanatically debated that it not only drew a line between Muslims and non-Muslims in Pakistan but sought to create a new cleavage within the fraternity of those who belonged to various sects but professed the faith of Islam. The moment they imparted an Islamic character to the issue, the Ulema not only joined the religious fray but began to award *Kafir* verdicts on their supposed enemies. It was not surprising because the members of this reactionary class had even passed condemnatory *fatwas* on Sir Syed, the forerunner of Pakistan, Iqbal, the dreamer of Pakistan, and Jinnah, the creator of Pakistan. Thus, the ideology of Pakistan was so subtly equated with the plea for separate electorates that all those who opposed this method of holding elections were accused of 'treasonable conduct.' Thus, they at least succeeded in distorting the real issues and diverting people's attention from the real problems. And, thus, a veritable Niagara of religious fanaticism and an avalanche of ideological fury was allowed to fall on the people of Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the anti-merger campaign was taken over by ministers of the West Pakistan Government. They had no need to be aware of their perfidious act; they were determined to break One Unit before general elections, because the new administrative set up had removed the provincial springboard on which they had been rehearsing before parachuting into the political arena. In the context of conditions created by these provincial hounds, fragmentation of One Unit almost appeared like a demand to grind Pakistan into pieces.

Thus, the atmosphere was filled with doubt and dismay: elections were coming but what was becoming of us? At the Election Convention held in Karachi a few days before the Revolution, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali suggested that, two months before the poll day, the Provincial Governments should be disbanded, an all-party government be formed at the Centre, and the Army should conduct the elections. The proposal was turned down, how could they denude themselves of power on the eve of elections. In the old socio-political set up, the right of franchise was hardly a guarantee for democratic functioning of the government, but they could not take a risk and commit themselves to any course which might hamper their plans to tamper with the elections. No wonder, the people disgustedly asked: "What is the good of elections when the same bad men

are going to be returned with renewed strength?" Who could calculate the cost of their 'fresh lease of life' in terms of other lives?

As they were threatening 'bloody revolution', 'civil war' and 'direct action' to settle the electorate issue and disintegrate One Unit, the smugglers were draining the ration dry food imports were becoming an ever-widening beggar's bowl and foreign exchange depletions had pronounced the country bankrupt.

It was a fatal fortnight before the Revolution. We almost refused to believe what was happening before our very eyes. We saw the growth of 'goondasm and gangsterism' not in towns and villages but in the sacred and spacious halls where 'elected members of the legislative houses' and 'chosen representatives of the people' were commissioned by the constitution to debate national problems and give a lead to the country. The West and East Pakistan Provincial Assemblies became the cockpit of deadly combats; an arena where the activities ranged from mud-slinging to murder. As Manzur Qadir graphically put it, "it was like this: the House was on fire and we thought it was fireworks and enjoyed it."

The summer session of the West Pakistan Assembly left a bitter democratic taste in the mouth. It was not merely an uproar of hoots, catcalls and whistles raised

(by tub-thumping agitators, cheap pulpit politicians and the familiar demagogues. A casual remark by a member of the Government party was the signal for a fiery campaign which sparked off a chain of charges and counter-charges, allegations and counter-allegations, abuses and accusations, insults and invectives. The air became too foul to breathe, for no language was considered too vile to describe and deride political adversaries.

The September session of the East Pakistan Assembly proved to be the last nail in the coffin of democracy. The members were not content with vituperative warfare, they were not even satisfied with the usual parliamentary stratagems and subterfuges; they must have all the fun of physical fight and create a scene of violence as there was no better bludgeon to denounce and demoralise the opponents. Thus 'fierce looking intruders' were inducted into the Assembly by both sides; masquerading as policemen, they swarmed the lobbies, crowded the corridors and even occupied the chambers allotted to ministers and leader of the Opposition. Tension mounted, passions ran high and, for two days, the House did not transact any business. Members of the Watch and Ward staff helplessly looked on and told a reporter in despair, "what can we do; they are threatening to beat us up and arrest us." Speaker Abdul

Hakim prayed for writ, alleging 'assault and intimidation', that he was 'forced out of the House' by 'unknown persons' who barred his entrance into his office. Shahed Ali, the Deputy Speaker, was the victim of a violent attack right in the precincts of a place where men make laws for good government and try to excel each other in their devotion to the country and service to the people. He died at the hands of men who claimed to be the defenders of our country, guardians of our freedom and custodians of our life. They used sticks, clubs, chair-arms, table-eggs and all conceivable objects to take away a life they were powerless to give. But they were not merely guilty of murdering a human being, they dealt a mortal blow to the spirit of democracy in a country which is still struggling to fortify its hard-won freedom. They destroyed the common man's faith in the efficacy of the democratic method; they struck at the root of our popular institutions; they brought shame and humiliation to their countrymen; they degraded human values and dug the grave of all that is good and noble and beautiful in life. Thus, the warring politicians had prepared a grand grave in which they expected the whole nation to lie. The people still alive, refused to be buried; the Revolution came and entombed the politicians.

The picture of Pakistan I have painted in these pages is set in silhouette against the background of the

first decade after Independence. It could not be depicted in bright colours, as it is more a portrayal of politicians, who paved the way for the Revolution than a verdict on the people or the country. Today, we have all come to believe that there was nothing wrong with the people or the country which had been driven to the verge of destitution by a pack of politicians who subsisted on fanaticism or feudalism or both.

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PART III

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CHAPTER X

THE REVOLUTION

*"... there was no alternative to it
except the disintegration and complete
ruination of the country".*

— President Ayub



THE REVOLUTION

It was an overcast sky; the storm was brewing, all hearts were relieved of hope, we were vanishing into a dark void when the Revolution came and streaks of light pierced through the cloud-capped horizon. The dying embers burst into a flame of hope fear and frustration succumbed to a new faith; the people were aglow with the will to work and spirit to live. The Revolution refueled the nation with power and passion and invited everybody to resume the broken journey. Thus, the Revolution almost appeared to be a continuation of the freedom movement which began a century ago and blossomed into Pakistan but faded out behind political masquerades during the decade following the death of Quaid-i-Azam. It was a day of reckoning for the politicians, a day of rejoicing for the nation and a day of victory for the Army.

President Ayub set his sails in a direction which, his own intuition, intelligence and sense of patriotism told him was the only safe and right course. It was not a choice between 'democracy or dictatorship' but between 'disintegration or survival.' All these years, the Army had remained aloof from the 'muck raking of politics', and yet it could only be an Army Revolution. As a foreign correspondent reported, "The civil service

(and the police had been compelled to compromise, to come to terms with the politicians, they continued to exercise an unusual authority, but only by playing the political game of manoeuvre and accommodation themselves. The judiciary has retained its independence to a striking degree but, wily-nily, the Supreme Court and the lower courts have been compelled to give constitutional rulings with political implications. But the armed forces have held firmly to the tradition of keeping outside politics. When General Ayub Khan was appointed defence minister in 1954 he disliked his enforced role and withdrew as soon as he could " Again, as Munir remarked in the course of his report on anti-Qadiani disturbances, "These Lahore riots also demonstrate that a situation which had deteriorated into an anarchy, thanks to the fumbling of ministers, magistrates and police, could be restored by the Army within two days." Thus, free from parochial differences and political squabbles, our armed forces came to represent the best in our national life.

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In a world struggling to evolve a new order, the periodic recurrence of military rule and political revolutions come like convulsions in the body-politic and the initial violence and bloodletting keep many wondering whether the patient is going to survive the operation. In fact such sudden and sensational changes have come to be associated with violence; a coup d'etat and bloodshed

are considered to be as inseparable as feathers of a bird but, in Pakistan, the big change came about so peacefully that some foreign observers initially failed to take notice of it. It was perhaps the greatest thing that has happened to this country since its birth more than 14 years ago and yet the shift of power and transfer of authority was effected so quietly and gently that many wished it had come with a big bang.

Secondly, the Revolutionary regime has proved to be considerate, lenient and liberal, they gave a fair chance and time to offenders to correct their conduct and mend their ways or be ready to face the consequences of their foibles. This approach has been both human and sensible as, in the past, the whole atmosphere was so riddled with corrupt practices that the people could hardly welcome each other with a clean conscience.

Thirdly, they realized on the first day that the old antiquated methods of work served only to accelerate the policy of drift. What was needed above all was a basic change in our attitude and approach to economic and other problems. In the past, all suggestions which did not fall in line with the set cogs of administrative mechanism were dubbed radical and summarily discarded. What is more, the old politicians did not debate an issue but denounced each other; they did not argue but abused, there was no conflict of mind with mind but violent personal exchanges. The Revolution was so

(enthusiastically wedded to the philosophy of action that, as never before, ideas had a chance of being considered and even accepted if they could serve the national goals and objectives.

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From a soldier to a statesman from the forces barracks to the president's house, from an army general to a public leader; how has this change revealed the character and personality of the man who assumed a grave responsibility when he became both head of the State and the Government? And how well equipped was he for the job and what were his weapons?

As leader of the quiet revolution, Ayub Khan's double-barrelled gun turned out to be his two strong principles: he declared that "firstly, we shall always be honest and expect others to be honest and, secondly, we shall work hard and expect others to work hard". He is so devoted to work and delves so deep into the details of the problems which come up for discussion that his ministers never risk to record their opinion on the file without a thorough examination of the case. His personal integrity has become an inspiring example to his cabinet colleagues and civil servants.

What is more President Ayub does not believe in shibboleths but solutions, he is in search of practical prescriptions, not theoretical formulas. He is more of a reformer than of a revolutionary; an admixture of realism and

idealism a robustly practical man whose vision is never beclouded by utopian considerations. He is fond of reading but has never shown himself to be pedantic, he can stand an academic discussion but his approach is essentially pragmatic. He has no pretensions to being an egghead; but even University professors and economic experts marvelled at his patience when he publicly praised a book which contained technical details about new agricultural techniques of intensive cultivation.

He has an open mind, ready to learn and listen, always profiting from experience and realizing his lapses. As Sir Percival Griffiths said, "The greatness of Ayub lay in his willingness to accept advice, admit mistakes and even to change decisions if they are found wrong." The other day, a friend described a truly educated man as one who has an infinite capacity to be surprised. But Ayub's readiness to be surprised has not only shown his intellectual humility, but surprised all those who had cynically watched the progress of Pakistan under his Government. The news of military takeover in Pakistan had produced an air of scepticism which could only be dispelled by succeeding events. As the story of Ayub's achievements spread, they began to describe him as the best and the biggest thing that had happened to Pakistan during its history as a young nation.

He has been straight and determined, imaginative and well-intentioned and, above all, diligently dedicated

(to the achievement of immediate targets and long-term goals which the Revolution set before itself. He has given a dynamic meaning to national ideals, possessed of enough initiative, he never lacked the finishiative, as as there was no other barometer of success for him. In a land eroded not only by waterlogging but the worst type of political salinity, Ayub proved to be the best fertilizer for the nation; he has created fountains of new hope for his people. As leader of the new order, the Revolution became not only his personal and parental responsibility but a national movement with which he had to merge and march for fortyfour Martial Law months.

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The people were sick of bombshells in the form of speeches and statements and waited for real live bombs which should hit corruption and bribery, privilege and nepotism, poverty and disease, illiteracy and superstition. The bombs exploded; the strafing operations cleared the accumulated mess of all the yesterdays..

►The whole force of Martial Law machinery fell on blackmarketeers, hoarders, profiteers, 'and other such vermin, sharks and leeches.' They tried to build their happiness on the unhappiness of millions; but the wells of their illicit trade were soon dried up. The most virulent form of corruption was smuggling; it was not only a physical threat to our economy but a moral challenge to the

nation. It was so scientifically prepared in cold-blood, that many began to take the evil for granted; the people believed that it was inseparable from our national economy and we should make due allowance for it in our fiscal calculations and planning programmes. Smuggling cannot be completely eliminated in countries with a long "unnatural" border line, but the rigorous measures adopted by the revolutionary regime exposed the smuggling dens in both East and West Pakistan; the smuggler's paradise was lost; the suckers are lying low and licking the dust.

► The Revolution inherited a shattered economy and a battered State Bank; within a few months, the country swung from bankruptcy to solvency. In October 1958, our foreign exchange reserves had touched a new low; the country was caught in the cobwebs of inflation; the value of our currency was falling and our rupee had to eat the humble pie, and, when they could not realise more than Rs. 20 crores from taxes and loans, to finance development schemes requiring Rs. 150 crores, the politicians resorted to the dangerously facile practice of printing more currency notes. Today, the Government has stopped borrowing from the State Bank; inflationary trends have been halted; and our rupee can squarely face the dollar and the pound sterling. Our foreign exchange reserves have gone up from Rs. 726.2 million at the end of 1959 to Rs. 1286.8 million in 1961. Today, all foreign observers agree that the Ayub Government has firmly put Pakistan on the road to progress and built business confidence and made the

(investment climate more congenial, despite shortage of foreign exchange, raw materials and technical know-how.

► Time was when the poor paid taxes and the privileged evaded taxes; but no government can be defrauded of its own dues, more than Rs. 30 crores were paid to the Government as taxes out of Rs. 134 crores declared as hidden wealth, and the entire foreign currency illegally held abroad was consigned to the State coffers. These amounts did not include the collection of 'enormous arrears of land revenue and income tax left by the previous Governments!' The new regime plugged the holes and covered the gaping chinks in the economic structure: the country found itself on the road to recovery. The Ayub Government was so solemnly committed to measures for imparting reality to the policy of economic viability that the Finance Minister was empowered to veto all proposed actions which might tend to weaken this objective.

► We had to buy food at such prohibitive prices and the yearly imports were becoming so alarmingly high that many wondered whether we were going to eat food or food was going to eat us up. The sheer effort to feed 94 millions on a coarse cereal meal impoverished the country, we had not even enough to finance short-term nation-building programmes. The position today is that, during the financial year 1961-62, more foreign exchange is expected to be earned from the export of rice than is being spent on the import of foodgrains.

Thus, "while the foreign exchange expenditure on import of foodgrains has been reduced from Rs. 21 crores during 1959-60 to an estimated amount of Rs. 15.7 crores during 1961-62, the foreign exchange earnings on foodgrains are expected to increase from Rs. 4.7 crores to Rs. 17.30 crores'. The country is on the highway to self-sufficiency in food; we may even have an exportable surplus when all the barrages land is brought under the plough, the reclamation schemes begin to mature and the agrarian reforms reach the last stage of implementation.

► Armed with the determination to put first things first, the Revolutionary regime took laudable steps to simplify and streamline the Administration. The whole engine of Government was overhauled; broken parts were repaired or replaced, a better set of bolts and nuts and screws provided, and new rules and procedures laid down to ensure smooth functioning of the administrative machinery. Besides, the Revolution instilled into the civil services a new sense of social responsibility, discipline and devotion to duty. What is more, even the lower officers were found to be less afraid of being given a chance to prove that they were wrong because their ideas were not likely to find their grave 'in the pigeon-hole of some official whose political superior is too frightened by the power of vested interests to risk his success in the race for public office by backing it.'

► The screening committees were soon on the detective

(job of finding the corrupt and the inefficient among the civil services. An order was issued for 'compulsory retirement, removal or dismissal from service, reduction in rank and suspension of public servants found guilty of corruption, misconduct, subversive activities and inefficiency'. President Ayub put it generously when he pleaded for pruning operations in order to 'get rid of those who have become a drain on the Exchequer.' High-powered committees were set up to examine the assets and records of all officials and report cases of graft, jobbery and nepotism. The screening over, 133 class I and more than 200 class II officers, besides 300 class III Government employees, were fired or downgraded.

► The land reforms are the proudest feather in General Ayub's cap. The Land Reforms Commission was required 'to recommend measures for ensuring better production and social justice as well as security of tenure for those engaged in cultivation'. The President honoured his pledge, the reforms were not only a landmark in the annals of Pakistan but a unique episode in the history of revolutions. The basis of reforms is more empirical than doctrinaire; they found a rational solution to a national problem. They proved to be altruistic without being sentimental; it was a sweeping measure but subjected to scientific scrutiny: It was a far-reaching step but taken so fairly that it ruled out the remotest possibility of a class war. It was at once daring and dispassionate

because 'it has been framed by experts who know their job', as Professor Rushbrook Williams said, 'and not by starry-eyed idealists who are more concerned with the rights of men than with the hard facts of a critical economic situation'

► Like straws in the wind and logs in running streams, the refugees have been tossed about by the inexorable hand of political adventurers. During the long hot summer, they lay scorched under tin-roofs; when the winter set in, they were frozen in their wind-swept huts; when the rains came, all their hopes and humble belongings were consigned to the watery grave. They were not victims of weather; it was the reigning political climate which made them the eternal problem of Pakistan. The refugee leaders had feigned epileptic fits but the refugees were perhaps too feeble to cry their heart out and even say what they wanted. Were they fated to live with fear and misery? At last, the Revolution came to their rescue; no more assurances, but action. The disposal of evacuee property and verification of claims is almost over; a number of residential colonies and satellite towns have been built; and housing projects are going apace. The Korangi colony in Karachi was an engineering feat; more than 10,000 houses were constructed in record time of six months. A series of townships are seen growing to settle many more shelterless people.

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6. Thus, within three years, the Revolution imparted financial solvency to the country; saved millions on the import of foodgrains; cleansed the administration, screened out the corrupt and inefficient; built new colonies for the roaming refugees; and gave the people faith in the economic potential of Pakistan not only to sustain the present population but raise the general standard of living within a few years.

The Revolutionary regime stoically accepted the risk and responsibility of running the country; they left the beaten track and laid the foundations of a new order. Above all, they succeeded in opening a front in the hearts and minds of the people, they made us rejoice in the prospects of a Pakistan which we believed was nearly lost to us. It is nothing short of a metamorphosis when the people find their dead tissues suddenly healed and humming with life. Doubt and despair had made us old; faith and hope restored our youth and vigour. The Revolution was redolent of the fragrance which permeated the spirit of the Pakistan movement in the pioneering days. It has been an exciting experience for the nation to be reborn, let us build up what belongs to us. With the creative joy of an artist, the reformatory zeal of a missionary and the dogged courage of a soldier, the people started their own projects on a self-help basis. Without a farthing from the Government, they are digging canals, making embankments, constructing roads, raising schools and

building houses... The Revolution gave us a fighting faith in our future; Pakistan is destined to be a country as Quaid-i-Azam conceived it, created it, and defined it on the morrow of its birth.

In his historic broadcast to the nation on October, 8, President Ayub said that "this is a drastic and extreme step taken with great reluctance" and declared "in unequivocal terms" that the r ultimate aim was to restore democracy. Commenting on this I said in my earlier book, "A revolutionary regime, without democratic ding-dong and electoral paraphernalia may enjoy more prestige and popularity than a technically representative form of Government but it has no means of assessing its popularity and knowing the trend and temper of public opinion in the country. Let the people speak out and democratically rally to the new order. Let us have a date with the people." The date was destined to be June 8, 1962 when Martial Law was lifted, democracy reinstated, and the Constitution came into force. The President called it a day as 'momentous' as October 7, 1958 when Martial Law was imposed; what gives it a unique historic place is parting with power without tears. Having passed through the stage of absolute power, few like to share it without a serious challenge to their 'rule of force'. With the return of constitutional government,

- (President Ayub's powers are based on normal law of the land and public sentiment. The President, today, wields less powers but commands more prestige; let us examine the Constitution he has given us.

-:)o(: ——

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH

*"I believe in every word of this
Constitution and have complete
faith in it."*

President Ayub

1

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH

"NOW, THEREFORE, I, FIELD MARSHAL MOHAMMAD AYUB KHAN, *Hilal-i-Pakistan, Hilal-i-Jura'at*, President of Pakistan, in exercise of the Mandate given to me on the Fourteenth day of February, One thousand nine hundred and sixty, by the people of Pakistan, and in the desire that the people of Pakistan may prosper and attain their rightful and honoured place amongst the nations of the World and make their full contribution towards international peace and the progress and happiness of humanity, do hereby enact this Constitution."

Announced on March 1, 1962, the new Constitution is a product of experience born of past failures and based on lessons which we could only ignore at our peril. It is, as the President said, "a pragmatic rather than a dogmatic document", wedded to realities and divorced from academic expectations. If it is more difficult to be uneducated than to be educated, it represents a bold departure from the old Constitution.

When the revolutionary regime abrogated the old Constitution of Pakistan in October 1958, some felt sorry, as they believed that it was the product of a compromise between contending religious groups and rival political parties which could only be reached after eight long

years of patient waiting. But the new leaders condemned this constitution because they thought it was based on "dangerous compromises". Whether these fears were justified or not, could only be proved if it were given a chance to operate, but the fact is that it was based on certain assumptions which were neither supported by the decade-old experience of constitution-making, nor justified by the peculiar conditions and circumstances of the country. These assumptions were that the difficulties arising out of the incorporation of Islamic provisions would be automatically ironed out, that the Head of the State and Head of the Government would subordinate their personal power passions to the larger good, that the federal form of government would ensure a strong centre with reasonable autonomy to the provinces; that the Western-type of democracy would serve to promote a polity which was in the best interests of the country. If these assumptions are reworded in the form of questions, we can more clearly see the challenge which members of the Constitution Commission in Pakistan had to face during the few months at their disposal to prepare and submit the report.

No issue has generated more heat, created more misunderstanding, and wasted more time than the controversy on the Islamic character of the Constitution. It was natural for the people to demand a constitution which should embody the highest Islamic principles, but

the ensuing debate on the subject was reduced to a search for a constitutional law which should operate strictly within Islamic premises. Thus, without considering the practical implications of this demand, those responsible for the debunked Constitution included certain provisions which were sure to invite serious interpretative difficulties. If the Constitution were to be based on Quran, the holy book, on Hadith, the sayings of the Prophet, and on Fiqah, the writings of the Imams, the almost insoluble problem would have been to resolve the conflicting viewpoints and secure agreement on the meaning of Islamic injunctions in terms of constitutional law.

Today, we all appreciate that the law of the constitution is quite distinct from the ordinary enactments found in the Statute Book. A modern constitution deals with the distribution of sovereign powers within the State, defines the status of the judiciary, the powers of the legislature and head of the State. Did such a constitution ever exist during any period of Islam? There were, of course, revenue laws, municipal laws, civil and criminal laws, but there never was any law of the constitution as we understand the term today. As in the Greek city states, known to record the first experiment in democratic government, the needs of the early Muslim Arabs were fewer, their problems smaller, and their number infinitely smaller than the population of modern nation states.

The truth of the matter is that, without the mechanics of modern democracy, and within the framework of their geographical position and political consciousness, the early followers of Islam set an example in democratic government and social justice unknown to most parts of the world in that age. But to say that they were governed by a modern democratic constitution which the people of Pakistan should adopt would not only be giving to our Islamic predecessors more credit than they would have liked to claim, but would be forgetting the exigencies of the age in which we are living. As there is no antithesis between Islam and the broad principles of modern democratic government, it was possible to produce a Constitution which is not un-Islamic. In fact, the framers of the new Constitution have gone a step further and laid down, under the Principles of Law-making, that "no law should be repugnant to Islam." This is a general but positive provision; any attempt to reduce it to specific details would initiate a debate which could endlessly go on. When the President was asked: "What is the hesitation in adopting the terms of Quran and Sunnah", he rightly replied that the "concept of Islam covers everything."

Can we make the people honest, hardworking, good, God-fearing by writing into the Constitution that they should behave like this? Thus, in Pakistan, where the vast majority of people are followers of Islam, there

was perhaps no need to provide constitutionally that : }
 "(1) the Muslims of Pakistan 'should' be enabled, individualy and collectively, to order their lives in accordance with the fundamental principles and basic concepts of Islam, and 'should' be provided with facilities whereby they may be enabled to understand the meaning of life according to those principles and concepts, (2) The teachings of the Holy Quran and Islamiyat to the Muslims of Pakistan 'should' be compulsory, (3) Unity and the observance of same moral standards 'should' be promoted amongst the Muslims of Pakistan, (4) The proper organization of zakat, wakfs and mosques should be ensured." As we are all ideologically committed to the 'Islamic way of life' and many wanted these provisions—or precepts—in the Constitution, there was nothing wrong in according them first place under the Principles of Policy. But ultimately, it is not the Constitution but the character of those who are commissioned to work it which lays the moral foundations of society. My lament is that even though the new Constitution is saturated with the Islamic spirit, there are some amongst us who think that the only way to preserve the faith and fabric of Islam is to make the law of the Constitution strictly accord with the Quran and Sunnah. But any attempt to go beyond the general provisions (incorporated in the Constitution) would be to open a front for an interminable battle of polemics.

* * * * *

The new Constitution provides for a presidential type of representative democracy, a quasi-federal structure, unicameral legislature, a simple system of checks and balances and an independent judiciary. The Constitution Commission believed that "we shall be running a grave risk in adopting the parliamentary form, either in its purity or with the modifications suggested and we do not think we can afford to take such a risk at the present stage." Thus, they recommended the presidential, as contra-distinguished from the British parliamentary system, "as a safer form to be adopted in the present circumstances." Like any other country, Pakistan has first to consider her own requirements. The level of political thinking, the genius of her people and the peculiarities of her geography seem to establish a preference for the presidential type. Pakistan can hardly afford the democratic luxury of having two Heads of the State and of the Government.

If there is one strong man in the country, elected by the people, he can not only give direction to national policies and end intrigues within the cabinet, but ensure a stable set-up for four or five years. It will be remembered when Liaquat Ali Khan was Prime Minister, Khawaja Nazimuddin was considered to be the formal head of State. When Khawaja Nazimuddin became Prime Minister, the late Mr. Ghulam Mohammad not only asserted himself too much but, according to some, acted

irresponsibly. In spite of his known ability and integrity Chaudhri Mohammad Ali was considered to be at the mercy of Iskander Mirza whose ambitions were never mistaken for his professed adherence to the democratic way of life. When Suhrawardy became the Prime Minister, it was openly said that two strong men could hardly continue in power without falling out.

Secondly, in the geographically-split Pakistan, the legislature may appear to be too remote and vague an entity to exact obedience, the President is sure to become a more visible and live symbol of the State. In fact, the group-ridden parliament may appear to be a dividing, while the President can appear as a uniting force.

Thirdly, as the most distinctive feature of the presidential pattern of government is that the executive is independent of the support of majority members in the legislature, crossing the floor will cease to be a paying proposition. We have seen (chapter 9) how changing alignments polluted political life and clogged the wheels of democracy. Under the presidential system, the legislators are not rarefied but they will have fewer temptations and limited powers to topple a government.

Fourthly, for a growing country like Pakistan, the presidential democracy can ensure more efficiency and show more drive and initiative than the slow-moving parliamentary government in which the legislature,

Like the House of Commons, becomes the real fountain of authority. It is significant that the American Constitution was drafted at a time when the British king was still powerful, but the fact that they have retained an independent executive shows that they still regard themselves to be an expanding nation.

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While there is a general reconciliation about giving up the parliamentary system of government, it seems difficult to silence the controversy on fundamental rights. It is true that these rights have not been written into the Constitution, but they appear in the form of 15 principles and it is left to law-makers to ensure that they are not violated. The common criticism is. Why constitutional deviations from these principles are outside the jurisdiction of the courts? Justiciability of fundamental rights is the current coin of thought; it is the crown of democracy, an emblem of freedom. In other words, the nonjusticiability of fundamental rights is equated with denial of freedom, an affront to democracy. Since 'freedom of expression' is one of the fundamental rights, let us frankly discuss the issue.

Judicial independence is the anchor-sheet of freedom, an essential concomitant of democratic government (all executive actions which have no sanction in law can be challenged and declared invalid by courts), but judicial

review or judicial settlement of the acts passed by the legislature is a practice which can only be accepted if it is proved to be a more effective instrument for safeguarding fundamental rights and individual liberties.

Firstly, there is a thing called dependability and calculability: if the courts were not only to interpret but constantly challenge the laws there can be no finality to legislative enactments. Should the people's representatives or appointed judges have the last word on the subject?

Secondly, to invest the courts with the authority to judge the actions of government agencies in all matters would be to involve them unnecessarily in political acts and policy making when they are not even answerable to the electorate.

Thirdly, it has been found that it is only the moneyed class which can afford to buy legal advice and take their cases to the courts. What is more, it is often in the interest of such litigants to prolong the proceedings, as they indifferently wait for the judgement, many public welfare projects are held in abeyance. It is the privilege of the rich man to have fundamental rights; it is the lot of the poor man to have fundamental needs. No wonder, the American Bill of Rights has been criticised outside

because it tends to emphasize 'freedom from' rather than 'freedom to'.

Fourthly, the courts in Pakistan have too many individual group and company cases on hand to be burdened with the task of reviewing the constitutionality of laws. There were 2,50 880 pending court cases on 8 October 1958.

Finally, the danger is that if the courts are competent to limit the use of legally possessed powers by other government organs, judicial appointments may be subjected to political considerations.

In Britain and some Commonwealth countries, there is no system of judicial review as they rely more on rule of law, rule of reason, public opinion and traditions; they have no institutional devices to protect basic liberties. In Pakistan, the new Constitution has provided for a high-powered Advisory Council of Islamic ideology which will periodically survey the national problems and submit a report. Its recommendations will be publicly known but the legislature will not be bound by its advice.

According to the Constitution, the legislature is the supreme arbiter of what laws it should make or unmake. And yet some of the elected members are so scared of exercising this authority that the r case could be put thus: "We are the law-makers but we are afraid

to assess the validity of the laws we make. We have the power to amend the Constitution but we are not responsible for the constitutionality of our acts. We are the legislative organ of the State, but we are unable to judge the legality of what we do. We are upholders of fundamental rights, but we are incompetent to administer these rights. Frankly, we don't trust ourselves; this business of adjudicating constitutional issues, interpretation of laws, legality of acts, validity of enactments, review of statutes, justiciability of rights be better left to the judiciary.."

The vital factor is judicial independence but if some still insist on making certain questions justiciable, a possible solution could be that all acts passed by the legislature which appear to contravene the Principles of Law-making but are in accordance with the directive Principles of Policy would not atleast be declared invalid by the courts. But, such constitutional procedures are no guarantee of maintaining the essence of constitutionalism if the law-makers try to shirk or share their responsibility.

* * *

As we come from the functional to the territorial division of powers, we find that the new Constitution has conceded maximum provincial autonomy. All the unspecified residual powers belong to the component

units, but the centre retains overall control and authority in matters relating to national security, economic development and integration between the two parts of the country. In fact, the problems of modern States are so demanding that, even in the old federal governments of the world, there is a pronounced tendency towards centralism. Thus, in Pakistan, even a strong President could not easily deliver the goods if a two-unit government is found to have the latent tendency of weakening the centre. A strong central government does not only seem to be the only effective answer to the bogey of provincialism but should be considered an inescapable development of the Presidential-type democracy. True, it is not the letter of constitutional law, but the spirit of the people which helps the growth of healthy democratic practices that can meet the challenge of changing situations but, finding ourselves in the transitional stage of development, we had to opt for a form of government which is free from the classical disadvantages of pure federalism.

Before the West Pakistan merger, provincialism took the form of (a) East-West differences, (b) lack of concord between the old administrative units in the Western wing, and (c) the struggle for domination between East Pakistan and the more populous province of West Pakistan. After West Pakistan became one unit,

the only way to reinforce East-West unity was found to be in the parity formula which gave equal representation to the two provinces in the national parliament. But the electorates issue created such misgivings that representatives from East Pakistan were almost getting ready to reverse the parity decision. Thus, even the prescription of parity failed to weaken the forces of provincialism. The situation was admitted to be beyond control when the two provinces insisted on undiluted provincial autonomy, granting only three subjects to the centre, namely Defence, Foreign Affairs, and Currency. As parochial politics die hard and habits of democratic tolerance take time to grow, a unitary form of government for Pakistan could perhaps prove the best constitutional contrivance as it placed the minimum premium on provincialism. But the Constitution Commission thought that "some sort of a federal form" would be most generally acceptable and workable. Thus, the new Constitution has steered the middle course; it has retained parity and provided for far-reaching deconcentration of power without weakening the authority of the national government.

But, even in a federal setup, the ruling politicians are likely to become totalitarian and the civil servants bureaucratic, without decentralization of powers and development of popular institutions at the lower level.

In a country like Pakistan where the vast majority of people are illiterate, the only way to secure intelligent participation in the processes of government was either to limit the right of franchise or discard the elective system of representation followed in the advanced Western democracies. Without denying voting rights to the whole population, Pakistan hit upon a new scheme which is, in essence, democratic, but the Western mode and manner of representation has been abandoned in order to create a broad-based polity rooted in the milieu which is the characteristic of many Afro-Asian states. It is the system of Basic Democracies examined in the next chapter. These self-governing institutions at the local and lower level are designed to counter the nervous effects of 'apoplexy at the centre and anaemia at the extremities'.



PYRAMID OF DEMOCRACY

' Build a sound democratic system of the type that people can understand and work '

- President Ayub



PYRAMID OF DEMOCRACY

The two wars were fought to make the world safe for democracy and yet, today, the issue appears to be how to make democracy safe for the old world of Asia and Africa which is being initiated into new techniques of education, industry and government. More than 700-million people in Asia have attained independence during the last 15 years; millions more are likely to be free in Africa during the sixties. Having emerged from the colonial cocoon, most of these new states adopted the Western-type democracy, but it could hardly survive the strains and stresses of post-independence period. In fact, it is being accused of exposing these countries to new dangers, within and without. The Anglo-Saxon democracy leads to multiplicity of parties; weak governments come in quick succession as there is a premium on crossing the floor and changing alignments; coalitions lead to political instability and administrative chaos; as the economy is shattered, corruption begins to corrode the nation's moral fibre; strong men emerge and take over.

This has been substantially the pattern of development in countries rocked by revolutions during the last five years. In his first broadcast to the nation, General Ayub of Pakistan declared that it was the ultimate aim of his Government to restore democracy but of the type

that the people could "understand and work". Within a month came the Sudanese coup; General Abboud promised to clear the mess piled up by the politicians and introduce "drastic reforms". In Thailand, Field Marshal Sarit gave the usual explanation when he seized power adding that the old governments were powerless to deal with subversive elements in the country. Even in Burma, known to be a model of growing democracy, the Prime Minister had to request General Ne Win to take over the country and restore "stable conditions for the holding of free and fair elections". Dissolving the old Constituent Assembly, President Soekarno declared that "guided democracy" was the only solution for a country which had seen the rise and fall of 17 governments in 10 years. According to General Kassem of Iraq, his government represents "dynamic democracy" as the old regimes were the worst type of veiled dictatorships. Situated strategically on the cross roads of two continents and civilizations, Turkey finally succumbed to repeated blows administered by the democratic vagaries of a two-party system. Constitutional democracy has been restored but the storm has not yet subsided. The island of Ceylon has been far from quiet after the assassination of her Prime Minister; the election campaign was ~~been~~ so baffling that few could delineate the nature of the conflict. India is often depicted as the mightiest citadel of democracy in Asia, but prophets are ready to bet on her democratic doom after Nehru. In the African state of Ghana, democracy is

supposed to be at the mercy of the ruling gentry led by Dr. Nkrumah who not only pleaded for endorsement of his plan to combine the offices of the President and the Prime Minister but openly justified "emergency measures of a totalitarian kind". In Congo, the dawn of democracy proved to be the doom of all hopes of peaceful development after the Belgian withdrawal, and all attempts to piece together the newly-born state seem to degenerate into a fratricidal war.

What is the propelling power behind this resurgent revolutionary tide in Asia? To say that it is due to the failure of Western-style democracy is begging the question. There is no discernible lack of faith in the idea of democracy, what has failed is the mechanics of government the representative system which confers voting rights on the whole population for directly electing parliament members. The fact that some of the new revolutionary governments have been able to accelerate the pace of development and introduce sweeping changes in the social and economic set-up and secure popular participation in the task of national reconstruction shows that there is no lack of realization to promote a democratic polity. The Western minds have become so skeptical, if not critical, of the quality and character of the struggling Asian democracies that the only alternatives they see is communism or dictatorship or both. But, in most cases, the choice has been between disintegration and a strong central government which may not initially abide by the

technical formalities of a democratic system. How is it that, in spite of all the goodwill in the world, massive economic aid from their Western friends and firm assurances of security from their powerful allies, these nations have stepped aside from the democratic pedestal? The background of these countries is etched in by conditions and circumstances which have proved at least two things. Given the best machinery of power under a modern Constitution, there can be no shortcut to democracy and, secondly, there can be more than one variant of the British parliamentary system and political forms different from the American presidential-type democracy.

It is a truism to say that a country where the vast majority of people cannot read or even write their name in the native language, the vote ceases to be of any value and democracy soon becomes a mockery. Mass illiteracy is the most erosive just as a higher degree of education has proved to be the most fertilizing factor for the soil of democracy. Having won independence, they could only think of the Western version of democracy. But it has been an exasperating experience, a fatal operation; as the people could neither understand the election issues nor assess the worth of rival candidates, the periodic show of ballot boxes produced a crop of shrewd and selfish politicians who capitalized on ignorance and held out fantastic promises which they knew could not be fulfilled. The result was that the multitude became helpless and indifferent; the semi-educated turned stooges or re-

bels; and the small group of intellectuals diffidently found that they could perhaps retain the semblance of democracy if universal suffrage was limited in terms of educational qualifications.

Again, it appears that the best way to reach a man's democratic heart is through his stomach. For the teeming, toiling millions of Asia and Africa, the quickest way to identify themselves with truly democratic government is through a rise in the standard of living. The West is rightly committed to help these nations as speedy economic development is the minimum guarantee of their democratic survival but, inspite of all the technical and financial assistance, they have failed to make democracy work. The problems of regeneration are so big and complex that democracy has been eclipsed by the gathering clouds of a grim economic situation. It is a titanic struggle, a frantic race between poverty, population and disease. The appalling Asian poverty has become its own cause, it is such a caustic and cumulative process that sometimes we are content with the explanation that a people are poor because they are poor. It is a common saying that 'men and women are sick because they are poor; they become poorer because they are sick and sicker because they are poorer'. The rising populations tend to lower the living standards and make planning a game of hazard. How to break this vicious circle and establish a new link on a higher plane between conditions of less poverty, less disease, controlled population and more food, more

production, better health and higher wages. The answer has to be found but, as in the West, during the period of transition, democracy must necessarily remain in a formative stage.

Furthermore, before independence, it was a straight fight against foreign rule and all the articulate elements in the national life rallied round the freedom party. Following a few years of self-government, the intensity of economic forces has not only damped the enthusiasm but, in the ensuing scramble for power, the unsettled social issues have been allowed to pose a challenge to democratic idealism. Thus, racial, religious, regional or language controversies have been largely responsible for recent disturbances in India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma. New provinces are being created in India on a linguistic basis. Again, caste system, feudalism and tribal tags create a climate of social rigidity which is always inimical to the growth of liberal democracy. In these countries, the common man still owes and shows traditional loyalty to the chief or landlord who is a more live symbol of authority to him than the intangible elective bodies created by representative government. In the vast remote y-placed rural areas of Asia and Africa where men and women are still ruled by customs and conventions handed down to them from a distant past, where all their hopes and dreams are within the four walls of the family eking out a precarious existence with a paltry piece of land, where their image of corporate

life has been confined to the village and many of them had no chance to ride a train, see a movie or listen to a radio, the idea of a parliamentary government controlled by them is as visionary as a visit to the moon.

Finally, even in countries that are free from social turmoil, where the average voter has a respectable standard of living and the literacy percentage is high, democracy has shown itself to be a delicate and difficult form of government. How far the emergence of General De Gaulle is a departure from the accepted lines of Western democracy is hardly a debatable point. Even in the advanced democracies, the role of "effective citizenship" is being doubted, as the administration of public affairs is being assigned more and more to specialists. Thus, democracy smells like a rare flower which requires the constant care of the gardener. It is perhaps like an orphan child to whom all pay sympathy, but few have the courage to adopt it. It requires more patience and passion, a better sense of duty and spirit of dedication than any other known system of government. As applied to the underdeveloped and undereducated Asia, the taming of democracy and training of its votaries must take time and, what is more, it should be allowed to assume constitutional forms which suit the genius of a people and can meet the basic needs and requirements of a country.

As the colonial rule had come to be equated with poverty, exploitation and backwardness, independence

{ raised expectations of a millenium which could be matched against the affluence of the West. Thus, the new nationalist aspirations were geared to the goal of an advancing industrial civilization. The growing conviction that quick economic development alone could ensure their freedom made them all the more impatient the urge for a swift switch over to democratic rule generated a new conflict between ends and means. Having imported the the raw concept of democracy, they tried to manufacture it, like other consumer goods, but the finished product was nowhere to be seen. It was like surgical grafting which could never be a substitute for organic growth. A form of government which the West has taken centuries to evolve cannot suddenly take roots in a society where the effort to run democracy is being submerged by a host of steam-rolling factors. With all their adherence to democratic plane, the take-off is no guarantee of a smooth flight or sure landing without constant refuelling of the spirit to survive the travail of the journey. Democracy must enter the hearts and minds of a people before it can enter the precincts of parliamentary houses or come to be written into a Constitution. It has to be cultivated as an attitude, formed as a habit and acquired as a way of life before it can be taken for granted.

Secondly, democracy can only flourish if it is allowed to grow as an indigenous plant, it can only be of the soil if it springs from the soil. In the early stages, the development of institutional democracy is as much conditioned

by social environments as economic progress is set by natural and human resources. But, as long as the thirst for freedom cannot be quenched by any other system, there is no danger to democracy, though there is no single highway to the goal of 'government of the people, by the people, for the people'. Pakistan has found its own way to democracy, after fiddling for a decade with the borrowed British brand of parliamentary government. It is called the system of basic democracies as the new political order is being pyramidically built from the ground up, with village as the broad base, the higher administrative units as the sustaining structures and Centre as the apex. As 80 per cent of her people are illiterate and live in villages, the three alternatives were either to disenfranchise the majority population or to wait till rural Pakistan comes of age or to make a beginning by opening the door of democracy to the whole nation but delimiting the sphere of their contribution to local self-government. The old constitution of Pakistan was theoretically a democratic document, but it offered no solution for associating the mass with the administration of the country. As villagers in East Pakistan told a visiting British M.P., "the democracy we had before was at too high a level. We voted for men who made promises and never came to see us again. We humble people will now have a due share of responsibility and the power to levy taxes for our own good. This is a far better method for the government to find out the real needs of the people than the old system which elected only one man for a huge area."

Basic democracies envisage an easy electoral system of small constituencies of 1,000 to 1,500 voters for choosing members of the village panchayats, called Union Councils which may look like little republics on the model of the old Greek city states. In a 15-member Council, it was initially proposed that one-third should be nominated to secure representation for women, agricultural labour and persons with special qualifications who may not be able or willing to participate openly in the contest. It has now been decided to abolish the nomination system. At the next higher level are Tehsil Councils which will primarily function as co-ordinating agencies, the elected chairmen of Union Councils automatically become its members, besides representatives of the towns. At the middle rung of the ladder are District Councils invested with the responsibility of formulating policies and development plans in the area under their jurisdiction. The fourth tier is provided by Divisional Councils which will seek to promote overall integration and exercise general supervision. Topping the list were Provincial Councils for East and West Pakistan which have been abolished as they became redundant after popular governments were installed in the two provinces under the new Constitution. As a result of this structural change, the civil servants are obliged to come out of their bureaucratic shell and become 'officers-in-council'. They are expected to perform the dual function of carrying on the routine

business of the government and operating as a responsive part of the new organs—sponsoring forums, tendering advice, acting as moderators and considering requests for more grants.

As power decentralization at the village level ensures a rudimentary form of self government for about nine-tenths of the population, the Union Councils are designed to occupy a pivotal position in this ascending democratic hierarchy. They may have no direct say in matters of high policy but, as they have become an electoral college for electing the President, the National Assembly and the two Provincial Assemblies, the Union councillors would make up a kind of permanent convention. It was not even possible to make the government machinery subservient to popular vote at the lower level, but they have been armed with executive, judicial and financial powers to settle most of the local problems and take on-the-spot decisions, without reference to superior authorities. Thus, they are not to decide whether Pakistan should continue to be a member of the regional defence alliances or the country should have bicameral legislature or the rupee should be revalued. The issues for them would be whether they should have another high school in the populous Union Council area, how they can balance their budget if they want to add a modern maternity home to the 20-bed hospital with a qualified lady doctor, what help they require from the Deputy Commissioner of the District to fight waterlogging in

their canal-irrigated lands, how soon they can build a road link to the nearest railway station, whether they should abolish the tax on the import of salt and recover the loss from a fresh levy on the export of onions. The provision that three members of the Council could form a Union bench to try and decide petty civil and criminal cases would make justice quick and cheap; in the past, the litigants had to travel hundreds of miles to fight a case they were not even sure of winning. This is the only type of democracy which the rural mass are sure to understand, they would be keen to work it and, above all, like to own it as they begin to control it.

The first elections to Union Councils held recently in Pakistan aroused such great interest and enthusiasm that the voters came by the millions to choose persons who could never dream of being returned to any representative bodies. The list of successful candidates showed not only teachers, doctors, advocates and educated members of the middle class but cobblers, butchers, tailors, potters, milkmen, washermen, etc. The new democracy was a unique experience for them, with the disappearance of feudal landlords, they were no longer encumbered in their choice of candidates; with the abolition of political parties, they felt more bold and free to act; the polling arrangements were so simple that manipulation became a risky affair; the issues involved were clear and close to them; they knew the candidates, whom to trust and who was worthy of their vote.

in the past, complicity at one end led to corruption at the other, as the people were indifferent, the officers were prone to abuse their authority. Nothing is more destructive of the democratic process than apathy which is often born of failure to understand a thing or identify an institution with enlightened self-interest. The essence of the new system is that the people can comprehend it in terms of their daily life; knowing their own interest, they are expected to exert and collaborate when there is an open opportunity to improve their lot. With this habit of self-help and new awareness of their place in the country, a congenial atmosphere to show initiative and better civic sense, the growing grass roots government could throw up local leadership in thousands of isolated villages and mobilize Pakistan's 50-million adult population for community development projects and nation-building activities. If Asia's real battle is on the economic front, here is a chance and a challenge.

But the spirit of Basic Democracies could be easily devoured by the moloch of feudalism. One of President Ayub's first public acts was to appoint a Land Reforms Commission. It was a bold measure to solve the age-old agrarian problem and break the traditional political power concentrated in the hands of landed aristocracy. The reforms have opened vistas of a new life for the land-hungry tiller and promise the birth of a democracy which has never been known to the people of Pakistan.



CHAPTER XIII

FOR THE TILLER

" . . . to create an economically
viable, socially free and politically
stable and progressive society "

— President Ayub



FOR THE TILLER

There is a common saying in our part of the world that the most potent causes of friction are *zan*, *zar*, and *zamin* (women, money and land). Romantic duels are considered to be a relic of the middle ages, but valiant men will always continue to fight for beautiful women as long as Adam does not shed his vanity and Eve does not change her nature. There is nothing wrong with making money whether the object is to make both ends meet, or amass wealth to pay income tax to the government, or grow rich and acquire a social status. But, land hunger carries a stigma of its own: it is the hallmark of a backward society; it is the barometer of political awakening; it is a sign of economic and social serfdom. Thus, in every age and country, 'victims of landlessness' have crusaded against the forces of feudalism; the triumph has marked the transition from the primitive to the progressive state. But, there has often been violent resistance to change; the landed gentry has fought to the last but found it a losing battle.

Landlordism in the oriental sense has disappeared from the advanced western democracies, but it still thrives in large parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In fact, land reform has become a popular plank in the

economic programme of the revolutionary parties in the explosive Middle East. The agitation to break up huge landed estates is not so much to relieve pressure on land as to secure a fair deal and economic justice for the poor peasantry and arrest the rising tide of political discontent. The emergence of the new industrial and middle classes, the alarming rate of increase in population, the spread of liberal democratic ideas and above all, the march of science and shrinking size of the world—all these factors have contributed to the campaign for a social order in which privilege has no place.

Within a few months after Nasser seized power in Egypt, a decree on agrarian reforms was issued, stipulating that no person shall own more than 200 *feddan* (about 210 acres) of agricultural land. The landlords were compensated in the form of State bonds redeemable in 30 years with an annual interest of 3 per cent. According to the latest reports, the redemption period has been increased to 40 years and the rate of interest reduced to $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent. In the sister Arab country, Iraq, the agrarian reforms law of 1958 has prescribed the ownership limit of irrigated land to 1000 *donums* (about 620 acres), and of rainfed land to 2000 *donums* (about 1240 acres), with similar compensation to the former owners. According to the Syrian law, promulgated in the end of 1958, no person can own more than 80 hectares (about 200 acres) of irrigated and

afforested land, or more than 200 hectares (about 750 acres) of dry-farming land. The Turkish land reforms law of 1946 ordered that estates of over 500 hectares were liable to expropriation, and the new owners had to pay the price of land six years after transfer in 20 annual instalments of equal amount, free of interest. The Shah of Iran has sponsored a movement for land gifts but few landlords have cared to follow his lead. Nearer home, Burma's Land Nationalization Act of 1953 lays down that (a) no land can be resumed by the government from a farmer-owner; (b) the object is to instal farmer-owners and resume land from landlords who do not cultivate it themselves; (c) democratic principles must be observed in the resumption, distribution and granting exemptions and (d) payment of fair compensation to be made for the resumed land. In the neighbouring India, land legislation has been largely confined to tenancy reform and elimination of intermediaries. The Irish land reforms are reputed for three Fs—Free sale, Fixity of tenure and Fair rents. The ownership conferred on the tenants became absolute and heritable. In the Far East, Japan has set an example in the land distribution programme; the law was enacted in December 1946 and the transfer operations were over in January 1950.

Latin America today is precariously perched on the edge of a volcano; the danger is not Castro or Communism

but the famished farmer. In a Brazilian state where an agricultural labourer does not make more than rupees four a week, a crowd of "800 landless peasants recently swarmed onto a 60,000-acre ranch—before the police could react they simply took over." There is no lack of demagogues who shout: "Miserable ones, when you want to eat, why should you go crawling on your knees to your landlord" The Spanish hacienda system in Peru has become notorious as it is so calmly impervious to change they have been academically discussing land reforms without doing anything. In Bolivia, the reforms were launched in 1953, as the new settlement schemes began to operate, agricultural production began to dwindle. Colombia's absentee landlords luxuriously live in Bogota and "run their farms by airmail". In Venezuela alone, the reforms programme has been successfully carried out and it is expected that within the next eight years more than 300,000 farming families would be properly settled.

In Pakistan, the dose of land legislation has been measured so carefully and administered so cautiously that the patient is recuperating without feeling the proverbial "after effects" of the treatment he has received. And, yet, it has been a major operation to rid the body-politic of the cumulated toxic matter, before it begins to erupt. How grave were the land disparities and how vital is agriculture to our economic health is borne out by the following simple study of percentages.

(1) "In the West Wing, the problem is not intermediaries but concentration of the legal ownership of much land in the hands of a small number of landlords, often absentee. In the politics and administration of Punjab, they have wielded a disproportionately large influence, as they did in the undivided province. In former Sind ten years ago, some 30 per cent of the total occupied area was held by estate-holders with more than 500 acres each and representing one per cent of the total occupants. The disabilities of their tenants-at-will, the Haris have attracted public notice over the last 30 years; these tenants cultivate 80 per cent of the land. In the former Frontier Province, a fraction of one per cent of owners is said to possess nearly one-eighth of the whole." In West Pakistan, 6,000 owned 60 per cent of the agricultural land; 1 percent held 15 per cent of the land in holdings of over 500 acres each while 65 per cent of the owners had less than 5 acres each.

(2) Again, as the First Five Year Plan put it, "Agriculture along with its branches of animal husbandry, forestry, fisheries and horticulture is the largest segment of the economy of Pakistan. About 60 per cent of the total national income is derived from agriculture. Nearly 75 per cent of the civilian labour force is engaged in agriculture and 90 per cent of the people living in villages are dependent directly or indirectly on agriculture. Nearly 95 per cent of the total foreign exchange earnings is contributed by agriculture. It constitutes

the base of our national economy and therefore the problems of its stability, its strength and the factors of its growth must receive special attention in all plans of development. Agriculture productivity, in terms of labour engaged in it, is at present exceedingly low which is reflected in the low levels of income of the farmers and agricultural labour and by the inadequate diet of the people generally".

The land reform in Pakistan was one big step towards progress as it envisaged (1) abolition of jagirs without compensation; (2) ceiling of individual ownership of 500 acres of irrigated and 1000 acres of un-irrigated land and acquisition by the State of land in excess of the prescribed ceiling; (3) distribution of acquired land to landless tenants on payment by instalments over 25 years; (4) conversion of occupancy tenancy into full ownership; (5) security of tenure to tenants; (6) encouragement of a middle class through owner-operated farms and holdings of economic size.

These specific measures are pregnant with far-reaching social consequences but, as the implementation record shows, the programme has been pushed through without 'slingshots and knives'. There was no odour of hostility towards the dispossessed landlords for they belong to this country as much as the new holders. Secondly, the essential part of the reforms has been executed in barely 30 months; it is a record time when we know how they had to wade through the jungle of

revenue records, prepare transfer deeds, attend to compensation problems and numerous side-issues which always add to the complexity of work.

The estimates available up to the end of 1961 show that an area of about 23 lakh acres has already been resumed from the landlords involving a compensation of rupees nine crores. More than 1,50,000 families of landless tillers have become peasant proprietors at a fixed price of rupees eight per produce index unit payable in fifty half-yearly instalments. Besides, thanks to the abolition of jagirs, the Government is today saving Rs. 31,18,34 annually. Furthermore, the Agricultural Development Finance Corporation, the Agricultural Banks and the Cooperative Societies are busily engaged in providing credit facilities, improved seeds, fertilizers, implements and taccavi loans.

According to an analytical report which appeared in "Times of India" recently, the reforms 'even go further than similar reforms in India'. What is more, the compensation to be paid to the landlords for the surplus land in excess of the ceiling is much less than is proposed in some of our States. In Mysore, for instance, the compensation proposed to be paid is 15 times the average net annual income of the land in question. Taking the average yield of an acre at eight maunds and the net income as half of the gross yield, the compensation for one acre will be the price of 60

maunds of rice, which means about Rs. 900 if the average price of rice during the last ten years is taken to be Rs. 15 per maund. This is far more generous than Rs. 360 which the landlords in West Pakistan will get for each acre of the first 250 acres of the surplus land. Based on a sliding scale the compensation in West Pakistan would indeed be as low as about Rs. 75 per acre for surplus land in excess of 6,000 acres. It will be easy for tenants who get the surplus land to pay the modest price...".

The face of rural Pakistan is fast changing, the landlord still holds a part of his land but he has lost his stranglehold on the tenants the tillers are not only becoming owners but feeling the upsurge of a revolution within; they are no longer humbled and humiliated; they are acquiring a new personality which is slowly shedding fear and fatalism; as never before, they are armed with the will to progress and end the days of poverty.

On the economic plane, the new opportunity, security and incentives provided to the tiller would not only promote his pride in the holding and break the concentration of landed wealth but step up agricultural production to the optimum level. As the yield per acre increases and all the culturable waste comes under the plough, we are sure to attain self-sufficiency in food and divert more resources to industrial expansion.

But perhaps, the greatest boon promised by the reforms is that these peasants will no longer be obsessed by 'the dubious privilege of returning a domineering landlord to the Parliament'. In the old feudal set-up, even adult franchise appeared farcical; voting rights for the whole population had no meaning when a few million depended on a few thousand for all the good things of life. All agree that it is a step in the democratic direction and, yet, it could never be taken by any regime of the past because the chariot of democracy was driven by a 'government of the landlords, by the landlords, for the landlords.'

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CHAPTER XIV

PLANNING FOR GROWTH

*"There is tremendous revolution and
tremendous outburst in the minds of
the people for better things in life"*

— President Ayub



PLANNING FOR GROWTH

They say that the road to Heaven is paved with good intentions, but the road to progress, on the more mundane level, is beset with dilemmatic difficulties. Good motives are seldom a substitute for good ideas and the best intentions can fail if there is no planning. But the very concept of planning has changed after the industrial and technological revolution in the west. The objectives of planning and methods of economic growth are, today, determined by the level of development in a country. In other words, are we planning for a developed, developing or undeveloped country? The principles of classical economics are no longer applicable to countries afflicted with chronic poverty. Fifty years ago, Alfred Marshall observed that "the study of the causes of poverty is the study of the causes of the degradation of a large part of mankind—overworked and undertaught, weary and careworn, without quiet and without leisure". In the affluent society of the west poverty has been reduced 'from the problem of a majority to that of a minority; it ceased to be a general case to become a special case'. Poverty has become more than a relative term; in the United States, for example, a fellow living in a log cabin, working at the gas station, and part-time dishwasher in the nearest drug store would be considered to belong to poor people' And, yet, it would not be

Is it surprising to anyone there if he has an old car, a radio set, refrigerator, a telephone, and wardrobe which does not contain more than four suits, seven shirts, fourteen ties, three pair of shoes and a couple of blue jeans. Can they imagine the grinding poverty in Asia and Africa where a vast majority of people live in sub-human conditions?

Thus, all the gadgets of our planning are primarily geared to the eradication of poverty. We have to provide for the barest minimum—food, clothes, shelter—before we can think of any increase in the standard of living. But, perhaps the greatest cause of poverty is poverty itself, it is a self-perpetuating evil which works in a vicious circle. It is like a "circular constellation of forces tending to act and react upon one another" as to keep a poor country in a state of poverty. What is the way out? There are many ways but there is no shortcut. It is not only a gigantic task, but a slow process spread over decades, but, can we wait when the gap between the developed and developing countries is galloping at the speed of geometrical progression? How can we break this vicious circle and create a better arithmetical ratio between a state of less poverty and more overall productive capacity to maintain the new relationship? In other words, how can we ensure a smooth and speedy take-off into a self-generating development process?

These are the problems—complex, awesome, colossal. The change has got to come, the challenge has to be accepted. The transition is possible—in spite of all the prohibitive factors—if our leaders can give a dynamic interpretation of our economic ideals and objectives. Above all, they have to mobilize the hearts and minds and wills of millions of Pakistanis for the battle that has to be fought by all. We have to swim ashore; we are not doomed to drown ourselves if we are determined to grasp the opportunity, show initiative and efficiency and execute development plans in the scale of priorities which set the pace to economic march. Experience is a product of time but many of us have to acquire scientific knowledge and adapt modern methods and new techniques to our own needs. The West may have no formulas tailored to our requirements; we have to discover our own moorings and find our own solutions. We have to give up the illusion of a 'higher standard of living' during the initial development period as we have to save millions out of our individual and national income for the investment sector. There can be no guarantee of regular contributions to the available capital; it is the quality and quantity of production which will attract the shyest capital. We have to see that the rise in the per capita income is not eclipsed by the explosive rate of population growth. We have to provide an institutional framework, an administrative system, to ensure capital formation, create investment incentives,

regulate imports and exports, formulate credit policies, achieve monetary stability etc. We have to decide whether it is imperative to pause and take stock of our economic gains, or should consolidation and expansion proceed ceaselessly and simultaneously.

What factors have we been able to build in our favour and what are the prospects for progress promised by the Ayub Government? What means have they devised for the utilization of resources? How do they propose to reconcile the dictates of a welfare state with the demands of a developing country? Finally, what is the dividing line between the economic obligations of the State, the functions of public corporations and the role of private entrepreneurship? It is hardly possible to answer all these questions in the course of a chapter; it is best to bring out the core of the problem by a broad indication of trends which not only influenced our economic thinking but have furnished a base for future development.

One of the firmest bases is political stability, free from the muck of party manoeuvres, the Revolutionary Government was able to subordinate almost everything to the goal of economic recovery and advance. Referring to the experience of the past, President Ayub lamented that "political parties were instruments of oppression,

disruption and exploitation of the people for the benefit of self-seeking and often characterless leadership".

Secondly, the stringent short-term measures improved the planning climate, inflationary trends were halted, financial discipline was enforced, fiscal policies were drastically revised, imports were rationalised, and foreign exchange reserves shot up to Rs. 114.3 crores in March 1962 as against Rs. 72.6 crores in September 1958. As the President put it, "The choice before us then was between a creeping sense of frustration and a bold and courageous resolve to pull the country out of the morass and bring it back to the highway of stability and progress."

Announced in the middle of 1960, the Second Five Year Plan (1960-65) is our charter of action for greater production, investment and income and to maintain the accelerated pace of economic activity. The total outlay of the plan is expected to be more than Rs. 23,00 crores as against a total of Rs. 1080 crores in the First Five Year Plan. The targets are:—

- (1) An increase in national income by 24 per cent and in per capita income by 12 per cent.
- (2) The attainment of self-sufficiency in food by expanding food production.
- (3) Expanding and diversifying the industrial base:

large scale industrial production to increase by 70 per cent.

- (4) To expand export earnings substantially.
- (5) To create additional employment opportunities for 3.2 million persons.
- (6) To reorientate and expand the educational system, health housing and other welfare services.
- (7) To take special measures for stepping up the rate of investment in East Pakistan.

The declared objective is on to achieve prosperity through austerity; the accent is economy and frugality. Many believe we can make a success of the plan if we can learn to live within our means. The most commendable feature of the plan is its practicality and feasibility. There is nothing fantastic about it; it is based on a realistic realisation of the situation; and it is hoped that the targets will not only be achieved but perhaps exceeded in some sectors. These targets are neither too high nor too low, the goals are modest, well-defined and attainable within the period of the plan. As London's *Economist* appreciably summed up the spirit of the plan, "The outlook for Pakistan as its second plan develops is much more encouraging than at the beginning of the first plan, and very much better than in 1947. Many earlier weaknesses are on the way to correction. The present leaders devotion to

the national interest is not in doubt. Within the administration, a wholly new interest in the problems of planning and executing development has ousted the complacent belief that a well-trained "generalist" could turn his hand to anything—a parallel to India's discovery that retired railway managers cannot run every type of public enterprise from refineries to steel mills. There is a movement toward substituting effective indirect controls over the economy for direct regulation. The result may be not only gains for industry in terms of speed and flexibility but also the release of first-class official minds for the much more complex problems of agriculture, where there is no present alternative to direct governmental action. The 'wind of change' in administration is veering to the quarter of greater efficiency and speedier decision. The outlook for the plan in the short run is thus reassuring".

The 'disturbing feature' of the plan is considered to be its dependence upon foreign assistance. The foreign exchange component of the plan is as high as £634 million. There has been an unmistakable upward trend in the accumulation of foreign exchange reserves but the shortage still acts as a brake on our capacity to plan within our domestic resources. The bulk of our export trade is confined to raw materials—jute, cotton, wool, hides and skins, tea—whose prices continue to

fluctuate. Food imports have been the biggest drain on our foreign exchange earnings but we have to secure at least 21 per cent increase over the present production to attain self-sufficiency. The Export Bonus and Export Credit Guarantee schemes have operated successfully but they cannot 'double the rate of exports in five years.' Again, can we meet more than half of the total cost of the plan out of our own resources? It can only come from taxes, government loans, reinvestment of earnings, budgetary surpluses and private savings. It will require a determined national effort, a real spirit of sacrifice and the will to avoid extravagance in every form, if we are resolved to implement the plan and hasten the emergence of a self-sustaining economy.

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PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

*"This task cannot be accomplished
by me or you alone .all of us have
to work solidly, unitedly"*

— President Ayub

Conventions

There are not two but three ways of looking at a thing, some see black, some see white but a few see grey where the black and white meet and produce a colour of compromise, a pattern of adjustment without which no team work is possible. President Auyb and his men must have confronted this choice when Martial Law was declared and they became absolute masters of the situation. They must have all agreed on the objectives but presumably differed on techniques: they must have faced the eternal challenge of reconciling ends with means. Imagining a figure bounded by three lines, if the starting point was A, and the destined goal was B, some must have recommended a straight and steep vertical climb to the summit from the base camp without calculating cost or consequences; others might have favoured a course of least resistance and signalled march towards C, situated on the extreme left from the base, which would have led us nowhere and the caravan might have gone astray, in the third row of opinion were those who liked to support a movement not exactly along the tedious triangular path nor a perpendicular leap to the top, but a slightly sloping position bent on the right angle with a clear view of the terminus.

1 President Ayub followed the middle road and made a name for leading a revolution which was uniquely quiet and yet spectacular in its cleaning-up operations and nation-building programmes. Thus, combining courage with caution, he set an example in withholding the use of his dictatorial powers; back to normal government, he is again in a position to set up a few constitutional precedents. He enjoys wide and varied powers under the new Constitution, let him discreetly refrain from using these powers and create some healthy conventions. These self-imposed restrictions will not only cement his relations with the National Assembly but establish good democratic traditions. Again, President Ayub has fathered the Constitution but he is also bound by it; above all, he has to ensure that the Constitution does not become a mongrel mixture of the two popular forms of representative government; he must never allow himself to be sandwiched between parliamentary pressures and dictates of the presidential system. Let no one be able to say that our Constitution is neither fish, nor flesh, nor good red herring. The President must remember that his actions and reactions to the situation cannot have the sanctity of law but are sure to acquire the status of a convention. In October, 1958, Ayub was hailed as a man of the moment, today, he has a chance of becoming a man of the future.

The issue is being not only debated whether Pakistan should or should not have political parties. The question should be re-worded: How can we ensure the emergence of first-class political parties efficiently functioning on modern democratic lines. No one is 'above politics' when we are all in the game, such a transcendent escape is not possible in the mundane world. Whatever the quantity and size of the bathing costume, you have to have an encounter with water when you go for a swim. The revival of political parties will not end or rarefy the process of democratisation President Ayub has started, but it will be a step in the right direction. As a democratic government is inseparably glued to party system, political parties are bound to grow in a country which is ruled by a modern Constitution.

If there is a long ban on political organisations, few can prevent the formation of underground parties which can prove very disruptive and dangerous. Thus, in any country which professes to be democratic, the objective should be to encourage the growth of political parties because, however long and arduous the journey and however the path is strewn with difficulties, this is the only road that can lead us, one day, to the realisation of progress targets we have all before us. This progress is not possible without tears;

Nothing that grows is ever orderly'. If a growing boy behaves in an 'orderly' way, the parents have every right to be worried about him. But this is the only way; we have to pass through the ordeal; we have to outlive the period of political immaturity and discover our democratic moorings; we have to bear the pangs as we watch a new political consensus struggling to be born. The other path, however smooth and evenly it may appear to be, can never ensure a take-off and generate the necessary enthusiasm to realise our economic, political and social ideals. We could perhaps promote both democracy and stability if we could somehow ensure that, during the trying transitional period, the minimum and maximum number of political parties are two, the ends of democracy are defeated if we have only one party, if there are more than two, experience shows that the government often degenerates into group rule.

It is being seriously suggested to President Ayub that he should form a party of his own. In cosmic language, Ayub has been asked to become a star and muster as many satellites as he can from amongst the National Assembly members. Is this orbital course free from meteors? And, how strong is the gravitational pull of the old earth-bound political parties? Is it a practical voyage or moonshine business? I believe in this case there should hardly be any conflict between conscience and common sense.

Coordination

From the first to the last day of Martial Law, we have been hearing and reading about commissions and committees—their appointment, terms of reference, recommendations and implementation stories*. It is time to pause for a moment and see that the pieces of machinery proposed by them do not jingle and collide. The clash is possible because every Commission and Committee has been swayed by the departmental climate without reasonably anticipating problems of coordination and adjustment. Organisation is essential, but over-organisation can create confusion and delay the disposal of work. If too many cooks are not to spoil the broth and we are anxious to eliminate conflicting viewpoints, we must delimit the powers and assign the functions of all the new agencies and organs to fit in the general administrative framework. Thus, if primary education were to come under Provincial administration, what role Basic Democracies should be allowed or encouraged to play in looking after this subject? The Food and Agriculture

* Land Reforms Commission, Provincial Administration Commission, Pay and Services Commission, Police Commission, Jute Commission, Sugar Commission, Credit Enquiry Commission, Law Reforms Commission, Constitution Commission, Medical Reforms Commission, Eradication of Social Evils Commission, National Education Commission, Company Law Commission, Maritime Commission, Surplus Manpower Commission, Food and Agriculture Commission, Marriage & Family Laws Commission, Finance Commission, Administrative Reorganisation Committee, Standing Organisation Committee, Sports and Cultural Affairs Committee, National Committee on Students' Social Work, Film Committee.

Commission made agriculture the responsibility of Agricultural Development Corporation; does it mean that it is no longer the concern of District and Divisional Councils? The Medical Reforms Commission have again handed over Health to the Provincial Government: are local bodies no longer expected to be interested in it? Are police officers to receive 'final orders' from the headquarters or should they be under the thumb of local leadership? What we need is a commission on commissions whose terms of reference should be "to examine the work and review the recommendations of all the Commissions and Committees appointed since October 1958, to point out any contradictory proposals in their reports and to submit concrete suggestions advising how best the ends of integration could be secured". This task could be defined as, to use a philosophical term, reduction of multiplicity to unity.

Population

Moved by the mounting growth of population, President Ayub said the other day that if we did not stop multiplying at this rate, we would all end up as cannibals. This is a stark portrayal of a situation which confronts today large parts of the world. Years ago, Malthus observed that the means of production were bound to lag behind the increase in population and the only way left to check population was natural calamities like famine,

wars and pestilence. Shorn of the dialectics of Malthusian theory of population, the simple fact is that our failure to plan consciously would be an indirect invitation to the inexorable forces of nature to take toll of human life. In Pakistan, population is growing at the rate of 2.1 per cent per annum. Thus, even the expected self-sufficiency in food is bound to disappear if we are unable to control population. And we cannot dream of a higher standard of living without family planning, a civilized euphemism for birthcontrol.

There can be no planned economy without planned parenthood. Family planning centres are being opened here and there but the funds, training facilities and auxiliary personnel are frightfully meagre to cope with the menace of multiplying numbers. It has to be done on a mass scale and on a national basis, the crusade has to reach every corner of the country. But, there are some amongst us who believe not only in procreation but in multiplication as they believe that whenever and wherever a mouth appears, a morsel is bound to appear. In fact wherever a morsel appears six mouths appear to eat it. There is no cure except to popularise the use of preventive means. But, they say, birth control is anti-Islamic, as no Muslim can be guilty of 'destroying life'. To my mind, nothing could be more Islamic as by controlling population, all we are trying to do is to preserve life.

East-West

The two parts of Pakistan are physically separated but the heart beats in unison as the State is founded on the faith and sustained by the common hopes and dreams of the people who declared themselves as one nation. The East-West concord is not only a desirable ideal but a condition precedent to our survival as one people of one country. We cannot exist without this feeling of beingness; we cannot prosper without a profound sense of unity and oneness.

I do not agree with those who think that parity and provincial autonomy is the price we had to pay to keep East and West in a state of 'harmonious relationship'. True, the country is geographically divided but we have to prove that 'divided we stand'. We can only prove it if we are inwardly convinced that we are destined to live together and no sacrifice is too great to vitalise this belief and promote a higher integration between East and West Pakistan. Perhaps we have not done enough to rise above the conventional embrace, how can we come nearer and nearer...

*I think it was a blow to the integration ideal to withdraw most of the West Pakistani senior civil servants from East Pakistan and vice versa. At a given time, not less than one-third officers serving in one wing should come from the other wing. In fact I venture to suggest

that it should become a convention that the West Pakistan Governor is from East Pakistan and the East Pakistan Governor is from West Pakistan. What is more, the West Pakistan Governor should be elected by members of East Pakistan Basic Democracies and the East Pakistan Governor should be elected by members of West Pakistan Basic Democracies.

*Language is a great unifying force; we should make Bengali a compulsory language for West Pakistan and make Urdu a compulsory language for East Pakistan, as ignorance is not always a bliss, the next generation will not, at least, suffer the risk of misunderstanding. Again, cultural exchanges on a large scale could create more goodwill than ever before, the delegations should not only include students, journalists, writers, lawyers, artists, doctors and engineers but factory workers, wheat growers and tea planters. The students should be specially invited to come and live in private homes during a part of the summer vacations, the friendly contacts, happy associations and sweet memories of the visit could never be easily obliterated from their impressionable minds. Our women's passion for husband and home is proverbial; inter-wing marriages could miraculously work to create new bonds of love.

*On the economic plane, nature has endowed East and West Pakistan with such resources and raw materials that, by proper planning, they can build up a strong

and sound system of imports and exports. Thus, West Pakistan is destined by nature to specialise in metal articles, fertilizers, cement, textiles, wheat and leather products, while East Pakistan produces tea, paper and jute. In order to maximise the benefits that accrue from specialisation, the aim should be (a) to build up Pakistan's industrial potential strictly in accordance with the accepted economic principles; (b) to encourage East-West economic inter-dependence partly to dispel domination fears and partly to ensure prosperity of both parts of the country, (c) to secure self-sufficiency in as many things as possible, not in each individual unit, but in Pakistan as a whole. The port prices (Karachi and Chittagong) of all the goods and commodities manufactured in Pakistan should be the same in both parts of the country, allowing for extra inland charges, depending on the differences in local freight rates.

*As the only feasible journey between East and West Pakistan is by air there should be a drastic reduction in the inter-wing travel fares, subsidised by the Government. If the cause is dear, we should cheerfully spend million rupees a month to keep goodwill going.

*And, we could make a richer use of the radio, newspapers and other media of publicity to project the image of Pakistan as a whole and prove to ourselves that the lurking suspicion of one part of the country dominating

the other is as unfounded as a mud house in the shining sand.

Even when we agree to disagree, let the differences not degenerate into a mutual recrimination campaign. Remember what Milton wrote. "A little generous prudence, a little forbearance for one another might win all these diligences to join and unite into one general and brotherly search for truth."

Let us never forget that East and West Pakistan are two eyes of the country with the State of Pakistan like the nose which not only lends them beauty but forms a bridge on which both the eyes are resting. They are like a pair of scissors in which the two blades are so pivoted that they can only work by leverage against each other; they are like two wings of a bird if you clip one wing you impair the locomotive ability of the other; they are like a coin which has two sides and yet it is one metallic whole. We are one organic whole; if we destroy the respiratory apparatus of one, the other will expire gasping for breath.

Middle-Class

What are we doing to build up new leadership? The present government owes a special duty to the educated middle class who constitute the cultural backbone of the country. Neither spoiled by riches nor crippled by poverty, there are many able aspirants in the middle class who deserve to be initiated into the public life of the

country. The middle class is the middle rung of the social ladder, it must be sturdy enough to bear the strain on the extremities. At present the country is run on the strength of civil servants and professional politicians; but there are men beyond the pale of this hierarchy who are spirited, talented and capable of playing a creative role in national affairs. These promising men in the budding generation never had a chance because they neither belong to Big Business nor to Big Government and they have no means to enter public life. What is more, there is a curious criterion that a person must be 'important' to be given an 'important' assignment.

Experience shows that all the people of a country never progress as a whole, there are always focal points of growth as in a plant, in Pakistan the middle class is the only section of the population which can intellectually meet the challenge of a changing society and become leaders of a new political era. As the revolution has put out the gas of "dirty old politics", the middle class alone is capable of rationalising this break with the past and become harbingers of a new consensus of public opinion in the country. For us, it is not going to be merely a period of normal political adjustments but a basic political education. The enlightened members of the middle class alone can impart this education, if they are given an opportunity to learn in the school of experience. The President may have a clear vision, robust common sense and boldness born of sincerity, but he needs more. He needs men.

CHAPTER XVI

POSTSCRIPT

"History would never forgive us if . . ."

— President Ayub



POSTSCRIPT

Few can forget the momentous months that followed Partition. Hindu leaders were ready to bet on Pakistan's doom before the end of 1947, even the British thought that Pakistan could hardly last a few months and India would be one country again. This fear was largely born of the fact that, economically and administratively, we were at a grave disadvantage. We inherited a splintered economy and most of the non-Muslims who opted for India left a dreadful gap in the administrative setup. We were more fortunate than India in having greater political unity and ideological cohesion. But, perhaps, we were not even conscious of this initial advantage and made a mess of our political life. Pakistan's economic progress and administrative build-up soon belied the prophets who doubted the viability of Pakistan to survive as an independent state, but we tragically failed in planning political life along the right democratic lines. The warring politicians 'emasculated all meaning' from popular terms like freedom, democracy, patriotism. As we all know, the situation in October 1958 was so pregnant with cataclysmic consequences that the Revolution seemed the only answer. But, by its very nature, the Revolution could not be a substitute for normal political activity. The broken journey had to be resumed because "we must have democracy", as President Ayub remarked in the course of an interview with a foreign correspondent. Why?

It is often said that the Western-type democracy can hardly function in countries which are afflicted by mass illiteracy, appalling poverty and social evils. But it could be equally argued that, without democracy, we can scarcely hope to progress on any front. Thus, it should be a simultaneous struggle to cover all aspects of national life, including political education which can only come through the mechanics of modern democracy. What is more, democracy does not only mean academic freedom; it gives an opportunity to the whole people to grow, to achieve, to expand, to improve in an atmosphere which is congenial to creative activity. A bureaucratic government can never replace a democratic government because, members of a bureaucracy, however competent and conscientious, and however actively associated with self-government at different levels (as in Basic Democracies) can never be instrumental in formulating dynamic policies and can never become leaders of national resurgence.

Now that we have a new Constitution, there is a new opportunity for the new leaders to try the new democracy. But democracy without discipline is like liberty without limitation. Discipline and decency demand that we try the new Constitution before condemning it. It is not higher political wisdom to clamour for immediate and drastic amendments because it should be a 'popular Constitution' and should be 'acceptable to the people'. Firstly, members of the National

Assembly are under oath, and morally bound, to work it. Secondly the Constitution deserves a trial as it has been chased after due deference to the peculiar conditions and special requirements of this country. Thirdly, the demand to revert to the parliamentary system would be to begin the task *de novo*—fifteen years after the birth of Pakistan. Fourthly, the President has repeatedly said that "no human document can be final or perfect and if experience dictates that some changes are necessary, you are certainly in a position to refine and readjust it".

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In William Whyte's delicious phrases there is lot of 'group living', 'group loyalty', 'group dynamics', 'group thinking', 'group creativity'. Thus, there are many 'like-minded' people in Pakistan but where are the men whose 'minds' are so 'like' each other that they all agree on owning, serving, loving Pakistan... What we need above all, is devotion to the requirements of moral regeneration. We must remove thick layers of corruption not from the crust alone but from the core. Patriotism does not grow in a vacuum nor can it be practised as an art or learnt like an algebraic formula; it is a virtue which grows within us. The fear of law can make you act in an orderly way but it cannot compel you to think against your wishes. Thus, it is not enough that the people should be afraid of indulging in anti-social vices; their

own moral consciousness should govern their actions. They have to develop an inner integrity; the best censor is one's own conscience; it has to be a mental revolution. The only way to create a concord between our actions and beliefs is to mould individual character through self-sculpture.

Geographically split, with two hungry, hostile neighbours, and all the grave problems of a developing economy, we can only survive on the intense patriotism of the people and dedicated spirit of the national leaders. The intellectuals, technicians, experts and diploma holders have their place in society but what Pakistan needs above all is a crop of dedicated men. This dedication is born of love and faith: you have to love the land and have faith in its people before you can completely identify yourself with the country and feel an inner compulsiveness to contribute your share in building up a community which is proud of you and you are proud of it. It means that the only dictatorship you accept is of the spirit which makes you feel one with the people and the country.

The problems of the country are so big and complex and some of us are so addicted to frustrating emotions that the only way to defeat any upsurge of popular disillusionment is to have a new deal with the people. In all their pronouncements, our new leaders have placed an unmistakable accent on the country and the people. But they must never forget that they are rulers

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because they have a country; they are leaders because they have a people; they have power because they have a government. If they respect the people, the people will obey them; if they work for the nation, posterity will remember them; if they serve the country, they will carve out a niche in the temple of fame and live as long as Pakistan lives. They have not even to give a guarantee, but give their best to the nation. If they can keep up the tempo of work, they shall have redeemed their pledge to the people. If they continue to strive, they will endure all things and achieve many. If they continue to show patience and strength, courage and common sense, they can weather all storms and capture the hill. But, they must never compromise principle for expediency or temporary gains; they must have the moral and mental courage to do the right thing, in the right way and at the right time. Even a modest victory should give them the necessary self-confidence to attempt larger tasks; every success will make them stronger; it is achievement that leads to achievement. What we need is a conscience that troubles us, a spirit yoked to service and a faith that sees no failure. There is nothing wrong with Pakistan that honesty, hard work and intelligent use of available resources won't cure. And, no miracle can ever make us strong or powerful; we are as strong as our wills, we are as powerful as our minds.

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Perhaps, many of us may not live to see the realization of our ideals but it will be no small solace to see Pakistan on the right road as we are preparing to depart. This is our duty to the next generation; our failure to live by the solemn words we speak everyday will become a recipe for disaster in our own life time. Time is not with us—unless we snatch it. World is not with us—unless we live it. Islam is not with us—unless we follow it. God is not with us—unless we obey Him.

At the top of a hill near Peking which had become a popular haunt for suicides, the Chinese authorities prominently displayed the following notice: "Pause and reflect. If you reflect today, you will still do that which you purport to do tomorrow; but if you do that today, you will not be able to reflect tomorrow". It is a momentous choice; we have to make it but, before we make it, let us remember:

"Once to every man and nation,
Comes the moment to decide.
Then it is the brave man chooses,
While the coward stands aside,
Till the multitude makes virtue
Of the faith they had denied."

Tarazi Collection